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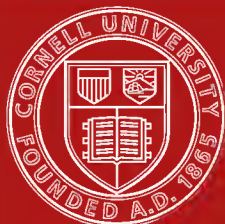
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RICHARD WAGNER

AND

THE STYLE OF THE MUSIC-DRAMA

BY

WILBUR FISKE SSTONE, JUN.

VOL. I.

THE STYLE OF THE MUSIC-DRAMA

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## PREFACE.

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THE Nineteenth Century is drawing to a close. The same cannot be said of the Wagner question. The century is marked by the fierceness of the debates with which it has bristled. Already in Science, however, heated discussion is being discountenanced in favour of *positive work*. May we not hope that the Music-Drama question will fare likewise. It would be a pity if a serious attempt at a new Art were to remain sporadic, blighted by a controversy that already makes an extensive bibliography in itself. Beside a mass of adverse criticism and friendly elucidation, and Wagner's own theoretical works, we have his Art-works as settled facts. Has not the time arrived to reconnoitre a little—to realise where we are—and in this *post-Wagner* mood to attempt some positive answer to the question—"What next"? The present work is an essay towards resuming and defining what may be learned from Wagner, and the whole discussion of his works and ideas.

There arises the question—what purpose has such a work? It being generally recognised that rules of procedure will not make Art-works, there yet remains the fact that the definition of some of the conditions of style may be of some service in turning the eyes of composers in the right direction, perhaps also of service in leading to more worthy and sympathetic performances of the works. Moreover, it is quite possible that rational conviction on the part of an artist is not necessarily inconsistent with spontaneous production. That it has often been so in Art is undeniable, but the very case of Wagner is a strong point against its fatality. Hence, a recognition of the direction in which to look for a perfect style might be a direct aid to the creative artist.

Further, a factor in the real and living existence of an Art-work is the

audience, including critics. This, particularly in the case of a new Art, means that it is expedient for the audience to realise the best way of approaching the given kind of Art-work, and this may be furthered by an appreciation of the peculiarities of the style as distinguished from that of other kinds of Art-works. It is for the definition of this in the case of the Music-Drama that the present essay strives.

The second volume will take up the works of Richard Wagner one by one, and compare them as concrete results with that style of the Music-Drama described somewhat in detail in the present volume, as the norm or type of a particular dramatic species.

LONDON, *April* 1897.

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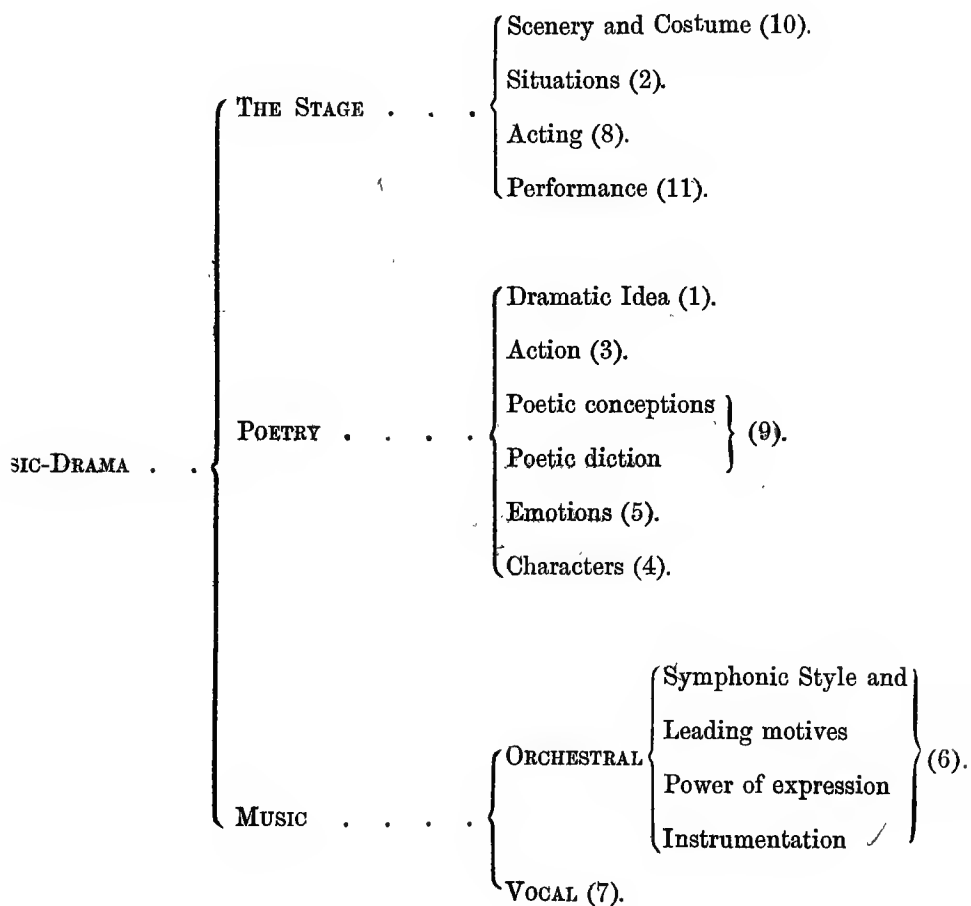
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(*With Parts numbered for Reference.*)



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*On outer margin of pages, refer to Canons similarly lettered in Chapter III. (Division II.).*

*On inner margin of pages, to Notes similarly numbered in Appendix, pp. 145 et seq.*

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*"Arts," used in place of 'Fine Arts,' is a general term embracing Music, Architecture, Literature, the Stage, etc., and 'contemplator' stands for spectator-auditor-reader.*

*Stage is sometimes employed where it was feared that 'Drama' might not forcibly suggest viva voce and viva scena.*



# THE STYLE OF THE MUSIC-DRAMA.

## INTRODUCTION.

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(a) SINCE we are going to consider an Art which is compounded of several Arts, it will be well to consider for a moment what a 'compound Art' is. A Gothic cathedral may be taken as an example of a 'compound Art.' It is a building, it presents an architectural design, there are statues and bas-reliefs, paintings and mosaic-work, and music enters into the services for which the building exists. All these Arts combine to work a 'cumulative effect' on the mind of the observer. A Gothic cathedral may be viewed as a *combination of Arts adapted to a certain end*.

The possibility of combining various Arts depends largely upon the nearness of relation of the particular Arts. Thus in the above case, it was comparatively easy to lay the stones according to a design more pleasing to the eye than a bare oblong hall would be. In shaping the stones for the building purposes it lay at hand to include a higher grade of Sculpture, and hence statues and bas-reliefs. Paintings and mosaic-work are easily combined with the laying of pavement and with the decoration of the interior

walls. Music agrees with the spirit of the service, and hence may be combined with the same to intensify the effect.

The advantages which accrue from such a combination of Arts do not arise from the mere juxtaposition of works of several Arts chosen without regard to any particular end. The parts are fitted to each other, are *harmonious*, and they all work for a particular end, an 'end' differing from that of any one of the component Arts working independently for itself. The result is a *Compound Art*, displaying *Style*, and a Style peculiar to itself.

(b) We have remarked the use of Music in connection with the church service, and have foreshadowed a certain harmony between the effects of solemn Music and the religious sentiments. Another Art—Poetry—may also be recognised as occurring in connection with the services, in the psalms and hymns. The fact that hymns and the psalms are so frequently *sung* seems to sanction the idea that *Poetry* and *Music* are so closely related that their combination is natural; and in fact, Music and Poetry are continually combined, both in religious and in secular songs.

A bond of relationship may be traced in the fact that Poetry appeals to our feelings, and Music does also; hence combined in a song or hymn, each may work its effect on the mind, and affect us more strongly and pleasantly than either one would alone. In case there is not only a poetic idea, but also poetic form—rhythm, &c., this rhythm also finds a counterpart in Music which is itself rhythmical. Vocal Music is especially allied to Poetry when the circumstances of its rendition are such that the singer is posited as personally experiencing the lofty emotions expressed in the words of his song; for in such an attitude towards his words it seems more natural to the auditor that he should employ a means of expression—Poetry and Music—so different from that which he employs in everyday life. In such a personal situation the singer ceases to be a cold outsider relating some impersonal event, or narrating the joys and sufferings of others (Epic or Narrative situation), and becomes himself the one afflicted or overjoyed to an extent and in a manner sufficiently unusual to justify his recourse to a mode of expression so intense and exalted, and unaccustomed as Music.

Instrumental Music as a separate art has made great progress in the expression of various phases of emotion. As separate arts, Poetry and Music have reached a high degree of development, and it is conceivable that could the two arts be harmoniously combined, a *new art* might be founded which might outshine its parents in force and beauty. Various phases of the attempted combination of Dramatic Poetry and Music are the works of Gluck, the programme music of Berlioz, and the modern 'Opera.' Let us consider the latter for a moment.

The Opera suffers from a misapprehension of what 'combination' is. The Opera is a mixture to amuse a pleasure-seeking audience, and is not properly a compound at all. The conditions of its making were not aus-

picious. The artist for the new art ought to have been the artist of the whole. The new art suffered from the fact that one man executed the drama and another composed the music for it. Not only this, but the text was usually taken from some drama which had been written for a spoken drama, with no reference to any subsequent combination with music. The conditions of its renditions, too, were unfavourable to a serious art.

We might employ a metaphor from chemistry, and say that one Art has a greater 'affinity' for some Arts than for others—it has a '*combining power*' and the product is a 'chemical compound,' *not* a mere 'physical mixture.'

The Opera was lacking in a good many respects, the Music in parts was lacking in nobility and at times frivolous, the text was often as frivolous and foolish, and 'ballets' occurred where there was no reason for their introduction—where they interfered with the dramatic unity. But the *principle* which was assaulted was that there was no *unity*—no *Style*—the Music did not agree with the dramatic context, and hence an harmonious effect was not attained. The Opera, so far as Tragedy was concerned, lacked consistency—harmony, viz. it did not display 'Style.'

It was not yet fully realised that a harmonious combination of Music with Drama might necessitate a kind of Drama which differed essentially from Drama in its independent form of the 'spoken Drama,' and that Music as an independent art might have to suffer some changes to fit it for the compound art—the Music-Drama. In other words, it was not recognised that since the Music-Drama was a *new art* it would have a *Style of its own*.

Richard Wagner was able both to make his Drama and write his Music, and therefore was in a better position to bring into harmony two Arts which had reached such a development in their independent states that they were not easily reconcilable. It required the subtle sublimation of that wonderful alembic—the 'single mind,' to insure a compound.

(c) There is a special reason why a combination between Drama and Music ought to be effective. The stage, viewed as a series of pictures, gives us the *outer* man—his movements, &c.—but it does not give us any direct insight as to the '*inner*' man—the workings of his *mind*.

Every means is employed to make us *feel* what is taking place in the actor's mind, but even Speech can give us the *expression* of the character's emotions, only *not* the emotions themselves. We feel that if we could only draw away the opaque veil which hides his mind from ours, we might be able to follow the terrible drama which is playing in his *mind*—the very seat of the whole drama—for its acts of volition are that of which the momentous acts are only the results, the consequences. The final springs of the whole action lie hidden in the minds of the various characters, and if we would view the *whole* drama of man we should feel his feelings as well as see his acts. Hence, if Music were able to admit us more intimately into the very minds of the actors we should see the drama

unfold itself before our eyes as a *whole*—even as our own dramas unfold themselves to us—not as acts only, but as the temptations thereto, the desires, the pain, the indecision, the resolution, and the momentous step.

*Music* is able to do this to a certain degree, providing we are sensitive to its power, and are able to feel that the strains of the orchestra present that *inner* drama, the *outer* side of which we perceive through the eye. After a long and slow development, the orchestra has been raised to a most powerful exponent of all the phases of deep emotion; this is especially true if the imagination be *aided by some external means* such as the action on the stage. In connection with all the means of expression of the *stage*, Music gains that *definiteness* of *expression* of particular emotions which it lacks as an independent Art, and Drama gains in fineness of expression and beauty. Music is able to aid us by forcibly suggesting that which we have to supply in contemplating the Spoken Drama, viz. the invisible movements of the minds of the characters. (Cf. the pantomime in Verdi's *Otello*, act iv., where Othello enters.) The difference between this and the case in which music attempts to supply by itself the whole apparatus of the stage is very evident. The latter has often been the besetting sin of programme-music. To suggest concrete objects or events with unerring surety and uniformity is probably beyond the powers of expression of Music.

Music is particularly liable to misunderstandings when it attempts to depict *distinct* phases of emotion. It needs something to indicate to the auditor the *distinct* phase of emotion which the composer intended to depict. It is just here that the Stage is capable of befriending Music by means of its combined apparatus of scenery, costume, action, speech, and gesture. Through the Stage, Music receives just that support which its intrinsic weakness (as regards the suggestion of definite phases of feelings) requires. The 'critical point' which renders such a rich combination possible is this—that the same organ which is employed for *speaking* in the Drama is employed for *singing* in Music. Hence the possibility of intimately combining Drama and Music.

It is not intended to assert dogmatically that there can be no Drama without Music, or that there can be no Music without Drama, but only that there is a separate art possible—the Music-Drama.

Moreover, it is not necessary to pose as 'prohibitionists' of the less lofty Arts, but only cry out against the complete neglect of the more lofty Arts. We need not condemn works which do not agree with the standard proposed in this book even, but merely notice and define an ideal which, if attained, would be marked by a complete agreement of all details, viz. would display a 'Style.'

The realisation of a combination of Poetry (in its narrower literary sense) with Music, to form *Song* is dependent upon a 'critical point' in man's nature—the possibility of *singing*. Orchestral Music requires words

to fix definitely the particular phase of the emotion, but the bridge between Language and orchestral Music would be wanting without the happy fact that the same organ which is the organ of speech, can also be cultivated to the rank of a musical instrument, and yet not renounce its more primitive function of *speech*. The *words* are there, and the capacity for raising them to a musical condition is there also in the *vocal chords*, which are capable of being cultivated for musical purposes so far beyond the point necessary for everyday speech. It seems strange that the human race so early discovered and cultivated this simple feature of their bodily organisation—that they should have been able to develope so noble an art as song from a very simple quality of the organs serving for speech. In the possibility of the Music-Drama, this parasitical faculty of ‘singing’ is a critical point, a *sine quâ non* of the combination of Music and words.

Let us now consider *why* Music, among all the Arts, is so particularly fitted to present the inner (mental) drama of which the Stage is the ‘outward and visible sign.’

In the first place, Music appeals to the *ear* and not to the eye, viz. Music is *invisible*, and therefore adapted to present a world which is invisible. In this, Music is contrasted with all the Arts. The Arts for the most part deal with the visible world, or themselves appeal to the eye. Withal Art has been more parasitical upon the eye than upon the ear.

Another analogy between Music and emotions is that ‘*space* relations’ are absent from both; the ‘yard stick’ does not enter into the states of consciousness which we designate as emotions, nor are the sensations of Music at all measured in inches, feet, and yards. The *eye*, not the ear, is the sense-organ for measures of length, breadth, and thickness. This leads us to a quality Music possesses which renders it most subtly capable of standing for emotions: this is, ‘*variations in degree*.’ The measuring-rod is excluded from auditory sensation, but in its place there is a measure which is quite as fine and forcible as tenths of an inch and hundreds of miles. Listen to a large orchestra, and notice the remarkable *variations in intensity* which are possible—from a ‘*pianissimo*’ to a ‘*fortissimo*,’ from the stars to the earth. The dynamic changes in loudness and intensity of a great orchestra suggest to the mind that the music it is listening to is the direct outpouring of the feelings of the players. That is, our emotions extend over a certain time, and vary in intensity from moment to moment, and *Music does the same*, hence one easily suggests the other.

Listening to the prelude of *Tristan and Isolde*—as it rises and falls, now more intense and now less intense; at one time pleasing and at another making us wild for some satisfying resolution of harmony—we are actually forced into the belief that this is “*feeling*,” not *sound* only that we hear. The music suggests the idea of emotion quite irrespective of whether we like or dislike this piece.

• Music is superlatively *the* Art which wields ‘*Modulation*’ of all kinds. From soft to loud, from loud to soft, from less intense to more intense,

from passionate outbreaks to calm, from pleasant to discordant, and from discord to tranquillity, from sad to happy—from bewildering hurry to mournful tread, from furious dance to solemn measure—these are some of the ‘chiaroscuro’ effects which are in the power of the musician.

Moreover, Music is more *trenchant*—more clamorous—than any other Art. The eye can close itself to unbeautiful combinations of colour, but the ear is inexorably exposed to the musician’s power, and is not gifted with the indifference of the eye towards ‘discords.’ *In this respect*, the musician has a much less indifferent organ to play upon than the painter, and he can forcibly drag the mind of the auditor through the whole gamut of emotions.

The function, then, of the Music in the combination would be to present or suggest the inner emotional side of which the dramatic action and its expression are the outer and physical side.

The poetical side of Music being its *emotional* side, that side of Poetry which will best combine with it will be the *emotional side*, and this is pre-eminently ‘Dramatic Poetry,’ which is founded upon emotions. We have already seen what an aid to Music the concrete presentations of the *Stage* would be, and hence are in a position to recognise the general form of the Music-Drama as a dramatic poem with stage setting and musical dialogue and orchestral suggestion of the various emotions of the personal atmosphere. This idea will be more and more defined as we go on.

We have seen that it is one thing to expect Music to suggest broad phases of feeling, and quite another to expect it to paint objective occurrences. Music which suggests no more than a sequence of the more distinct phases of emotion is likely to work its effect—*without* a programme even.

Music which usurps the art of Painting, and attempts to depict not the ‘inner’ world of vague feelings, but the ‘outer’ world of everyday impressions, is very likely to be misunderstood, even in connection with an extensive ‘programme.’ Beyond thunder and the songs of birds (which happen to lie in the domain of sound) orchestral Music has little of the resources of the artist’s brush. The prime advantage of the Music-Drama is that it allows Music and Painting to wield their powers each in its *separate* domain—the Music as the exponent of feeling, the Stage as the representative of the visual world. The Music-Drama does not compel any *forcing* of the arts which enter into it.

It follows that we need not trouble ourselves about the capacity of Music in itself to excite visual representations, for we have the visual world fully represented on the stage. Further, we have language (in the musical dialogue) as an extra security against the music being misunderstood in its suggestion of particular emotions.

The way in which Music may present a particular emotion belongs to the psychology of Music. It will suffice for our purposes to remark that Music directly affects us as

joyful, or sad, or as expressive of suffering. Now the emotions may be grouped in a like manner, those which are associated with pleasure, with sadness, and with pain. If Music, then, can directly suggest joyfulness, sadness, and suffering, it has formed a sensuous basis which the other parts of the Stage (action, language, and gesture) can determine as a *particular* emotion. It is not necessary that the Music should excite the emotions of the *spectators* as the sensational play does—this would be detrimental to the whole enjoyment of the Music—it need only suggest the emotions which the *actors* may be supposed to experience in the particular situation. Sensational plays and plays in which old religious dissensions are renewed have a tendency to excite the feelings of the audience (pity, indignation, &c.). The Style of the Music-Drama neither calls for such intense effects, nor is the Music destined to move to tears. We *enjoy* hearing mournful Music, and a ‘funeral march’ presents the *poetical* side of death rather than its occasional horrors. Music need not excite the emotions of anger, or hatred, or jealousy in us; for the purposes of the Music-Drama it is sufficient to suggest such emotions as felt by the *actors* in the drama (simulated)—not ‘presentative’ feelings, but re-presentative feelings.

Although Music cannot really arouse a *particular* emotion, such as anger, it may put us in the mood for appreciating this emotion, and therein it agrees with the ‘Style’ of the Music-Drama, which is—not to make the spectator himself experience the emotions, but to allow him to look upon others who are (supposed to be) experiencing them. For that matter the actor himself does not *really* experience the emotions under which he seems to act. The Art of the Stage is re-presentative—that is, it should be something for the audience to contemplate, not to *suffer*. High Art differentiates itself from real life and from mere melodrama (or sensationalism) by making the audience ‘spectators,’ ‘contemplators,’ of the stage as of a *picture*, and not as *actors* in real life. The Stage would be a poor contrivance for high art, if it made us suffer keenly. The suffering is more *re-presentative*—weaker—in the spectator than the actual experiences would be.

The modern ‘melodrama’ proposes to actually *excite* emotions in the *spectators’* minds (pity, indignation, joy, &c.), to excite the *feelings* of the audience, and often plays upon popular sentiments to this end, such as religious, class, or moral sentiments of a virulent nature.

Music tends rather to suggest to the audience *what* the persons of the drama are *feeling*, or what the *actors* may be supposed to feel. To show the difference—a mournful piece of music gives us *pleasure*; at the same time it suggests the feeling of *sadness*.

The object then of this work is to define a *Style* of the Music-Drama as distinguished from the Stage or Spoken Drama and from the Oratorio and Comic Opera. It is an attempt to show that it is possible through a combination of certain elements of other Arts (such as Music, Painting, Drama) to form a new Art, which shall be different from these Arts, and yet possess a consistency and harmony of parts which entitle it to the term *Style*.

The difficulty is to make it clear that the harmony of such ‘discrete’ factors as Music and Painting *absolutely requires* the Music-Drama to be different from the spoken Drama, and from Music as an independent Art, for

the idea prevails that there is no *reason* why the Music-Drama should essentially differ from a play of Ibsen's or from a symphony of Beethoven's.

*The Method.*—In order to tell what agreement should exist between the parts we must know the parts. The parts 1, 2, 3, 4, etc., of Division III., pp. 47 to 143, represent the result of an analysis of the Music-Drama sufficiently detailed for our purposes.

We wish to find what the qualities are of the means of expression employed. To do this we take the predominant characteristics of Music and Drama—the basis of the Music-Drama—and erect these qualities into *Canons* (*A, B, C, D, &c.* p. 33).

We then take these *Canons* and apply them one by one to each 'part' (1, 2, 3, &c.) of the Music-Drama, and thus determine what shall be the character of each factor of those means of expression entering into the Music-Drama that their combination will display that intimate harmony of parts for a particular end—Style.

We intend to deal with the serious side of Drama rather than the light side. The reason is that we are trying to determine a 'Style,' and the Comic is so linked with the (outer) aspects of contemporary life that Style, in the sense in which we shall treat it, is not possible or expedient. *Lack of Style* is in itself a feature of the Ludicrous.



## I.

## CHAPTER I.

## NATURE OF MUSIC-DRAMA IN GENERAL.

HAVING determined the function of Music as the exponent of the 'inner' Drama, we shall now inquire into the nature of the Poetry which is best suited to combine with Music.

In the first place, Music is an '*idealistic*' element in the combination, that is, orchestral Music is not an accompaniment of any of the dramas of everyday life with which we are familiar, or read about in the daily newspapers. Such a general situation as life with musical accompaniment is wholly unlike everyday life.

When we are spectators of a Drama on the stage, and listen to the Music of the orchestra, and to musical dialogue, we have a state of affairs, a situation, before us which is purely artificial—which does not obtain in everyday life—is highly unnatural, and may therefore be spoken of as '*ideal*.' The 'Style' of the Music-Drama is *perforce* idealistic, because one important element is present, *Music*, which would be entirely absent in real life, inasmuch as our actions in real life are not carried out to the strains of an orchestra. In fact, there is a vast chasm between this artificial combination of stage and orchestra which completely separates the performance from our experiences in our everyday life. This complete removal of the Music-Drama from conditions of everyday life is a most important feature, for it shows us that scenes from our everyday life are wholly unfitted as materials for the Music-Drama. Scenes from contemporary life cannot move themselves in the artificial atmosphere of orchestral Music. The mind has a sense of the fitness of things which immediately tells us that a physician represented to us singing his directions to the sick lady's servant in a bedroom in modern Paris is absurd—so absurd, that it wholly ruins whatever effect the Music or the Drama by itself might make. Music imposes just as much restraint on the Style of the Drama to which it is joined, as working with pieces of coloured glass imposes on a painter who would attempt to execute a landscape in stained glass. He *cannot* reproduce the delicacy of Nature with pieces of stained glass two inches square. But this impossibility need not prevent an artist from making a

beautiful *Stained-Glass* work, if he will only recognise the restrictions which working in pieces of glass impose on him, and choose some subject more fitted than a landscape to the artificial restrictions of his Mode of Execution. "Fidelity to nature" with threads or strings in ten different colours is utter nonsense, but a beautiful rug may be made well enough with the same materials. So the real composer, although a scene from the Paris *bourse* or vegetable market, acted and sung to the strains of the orchestra, is ridiculous, may still compose a work which is unparalleled in beauty by any scene in everyday life.

Scenes from contemporary life have their place as materials for many Arts, but they do not belong to the Music-Drama, in which conversation is replaced by musical dialogue, and the orchestra pervades the whole—embracing word and emotion and action. Thus we see that the action of the Music-Drama should be 'idealistic,' in the sense of "removed from the outer aspects of our everyday life." In fact, a glance at the 'actions' which predominate in operas shows that this has been felt by those who compiled opera texts. Many subjects are taken from antique sources, like Gluck's *Orpheus and Eurydice*. This serves to throw a glamour of unfamiliarity over the stage. Cf. majestic effect of priests' chorus with Egyptian background, of Mozart's *Magic Flute*.

The Old Testament has been exploited for some, as in Méhul's *Joseph*. History has furnished many subjects, as Wagner's *Rienzi*, and many works display a historical background, like Meyerbeer's *Huguenots*. In these cases the 'removal from our everyday life' was attained by going to periods which are far removed from ours in point of time, which means they were different. There is another way of getting away from life as we see it—by removing the scene to a less familiar 'region,' where costumes and customs differ from our own; gipsy life in Spain, or village life in Sicily (cf. *Carmen*, *Cavalleria*, etc.). By these means and others a certain halo of unfamiliarity is cast around the action which is to play under the unnatural conditions of Lyric Dialogue and accompaniment by Orchestral Music.

Another source of material presents some advantages over the former sources—the myth. Myths are to a great extent *already* artistic products; much that is most heroic and beautiful and pathetic has been woven into their fantastic texture. These myths supply a stimulus to the artistic imagination which no longer works as freely as the fancy worked in the days when it was not trammelled by the accurate knowledge of Nature's laws. In using the myth the artist frees himself from all those trammels which are imposed by Science and History, which very much endanger the historical plot and make it difficult to adapt to musical treatment. With myths the poet is not obliged to slavishly follow historical data. He is ruler over his materials, and can dispose them for pure artistic ends, without any fear of wounding sticklers for historical accuracy. Again, he is freed from

all the political paraphernalia which accompany historical characters and times. He is freed from all those troublesome religious questions which are liable to touch the various religious devotees in the audience. He can avoid bringing before an audience of mixed religious opinions the troublesome times in which Christian was pitted against Christian—times which are so near to our own as regards the questions that the very memory of them excites bitterness. He need not worry the auditor's mind with disentangling complex social conditions and relations and testing their justness or their historical validity.

We may look at these characteristics of an action not derived from history in another light: an art work which presents life, and yet life in the 'artificial atmosphere' of Music, must not challenge the keen criticism of those who know life as it actually is. By removing the life so far from its everyday appearances that *no comparison is suggested*, the spectator is thrown off his guard, and forgets for the moment to exercise his critical weapons. A 'lion rampant' in crimson on wall paper would hardly excite the critical faculties of the keenest African traveller. The object of the Music-Drama is not to excite the question, "Did these particular events ever happen in reality?" but rather to excite the feeling, "How beautiful it is that things are happening as they are in the scenes before me!"

It is remarkable how keen our 'critical spirit' is with respect to Naturalism of *outer aspects* of life. It is not until the mind has been completely dispossessed of the idea that it is observing a natural occurrence, or what proposes to represent such an occurrence, that it renounces its spirit of fault-finding. The vividness with which coarse mosaic-work displays to the eye its fragmentary nature and mode of execution is hardly sufficient at times to prevent the popular mind from drawing depreciatory comparisons between the design and natural objects. From day to day our eyes and minds become practised in the detection of slight differences (underlies the recognition of a person's face among a great crowd of faces!), and this practice is almost sure to react upon art-works. Notice our keenness with regard to an 'out-of-style' detail of dress (men's hats, etc., or last year's bonnet, and of the costumes of photographs a few years old, and illustrations in old magazines): yet it is largely governed by convention, for it solemnly swallows the poetic diction of the letter (post-mark Switzerland?) with which Lord Lytton opens his novel in rhyme, *Lucile* (notice that the *signature* even rhymes). Cf. Scott's *Lady of the Lake*, the description of the maid and her subsequent language when first she speaks. Is this the effect of the *novelist*? Contrast the general situation proposed by Shelley's *Prometheus* as a whole with that almost modern 'setting' of Tennyson's *Princess*.

It seems possible that this very point of Style, consisting partly in choice of subject-matter, will serve to explain the almost universal *uneven-*

ness of merit in the various works of a modern poet. Sometimes subject-matter, general situation, and diction coincide, at other times they do not; and hence the ups and downs in the *complete works* of a poet.

The Music-Drama should not *propose* reality (imitative) as its object; it *cannot*, for the situation of *vocal dialogue* and orchestral accompaniment is *highly unreal* from the very start. Therefore it should seek to make wings of its fetters, and devote itself especially to the beautiful rather than the unpleasing. Here we see one reason for severely avoiding *History*. History does not 'make itself' to be beautiful.

To Wagner's recourse to myths we do not merely owe a few novel plots for 'librettos,' we owe an attempt at a 'Style' in the *Music-Drama*, viz. the *one combination of Music with Drama which is possible*, under the condition of perfect harmony. Through recourse to the myth he was led to see what others had *not* seen—that the dramatic basis of the Music-Drama must differ from that of a *spoken drama*. This was what was wanting—a style of Drama differing from that of Drama familiar to us as a separate (independent) Art. Wagner might have *created* his works *new perhaps, without reference* to myths, but his 'creations' in their 'musical nature' would have been like those he wrote at the instigation of myths.

Mythology was not a mere novel resource for opera texts; it was an artistic *stimulus* to the *ideal region which Music required*. Wagner's recourse to mythology was not a mere episodic procedure, it was intensely and intrinsically associated with the *possibility* of creating a 'Style' for the Music-Drama.

It may be asked, why so much time spent on the Style of the dramatic part?—certainly if this were important musicians would have felt it. Well, perhaps they did feel it—Beethoven perhaps keenly. There seem to be indications in the music to *Fidelio* that he was much troubled by this very point. In the case of some composers it may have been felt without any clear consciousness of the *cause*. At any rate, its lessons are not being realised to-day even, in the operas that are being produced.

Music and Drama had become so highly differentiated from one another that the dramatist who made the *libretto* for the musician had no idea that he ought to make anything different from what he was used to in the spoken Drama. Not being a musician he had no feeling for that which is fitted to the nature of Music. The musician was impotent, for he was obliged to rely on the librettist for his dramatic stimulus. Moreover, he was prevented from developing his own real resources which he might have done with the proper stimulus and method.

Wagner's advantage was that he was at one and the same time composer and dramatist. Therefore Music had a chance to react on the kind of Drama which he chose. Both factors were brought into actual contact in *one mind*.

His recourse to myth *must not be looked upon as a mere capricious recourse to materials* such as his choice of Bulwer Lytton's *Rienzi*, or any other subject-matter from history. It was the choice of that which was *intensely fitted to the nature of Music* in so far as it could be digested by Wagner for his own purposes. It was not a mere 'fount' such as History is for the historical novel. Here is Wagner's own testimony:—

"Wagner's point of departure had been Music; but when Music had become for him a means of expression of which he was complete master, as we have said, he became above all—poet. After that his principal object was to complete that which a musical conception presents vaguely and evasively.

"'Whoever,' says Wagner, 'observes attentively my three first poems, will see that that which, in the *Fliegende Holländer* is only indicated by a very distant and vague contour, assumes in *Tannhäuser*, and finally in *Lohengrin*, a more and more precise determination, a form more and more sure. Acquiring thus the power to deal more and more with real life, I would at last, and under certain circumstances, have come to the point where such a subject as *Barbarossa* [Frederick I.] would have presented itself to me, such that it would have obliged me to renounce a musical form of expression. But it was just here that I arrived at the consciousness of the artistic necessity of procedure which till that time I had employed unconsciously. In fact, that subject which would have compelled me to entirely forget Music taught me to recognise that which constitutes the real poetical subject; for I felt sure that there where I should have been obliged to leave my musical faculties unemployed, it would also have been necessary to subordinate to political abstractions the poetical faculties which I had acquired, and consequently deny my artistic nature in general. And it was at exactly the same time that objective events made me recognise the opposition which exists between the historico-political life and that which flows from pure human nature. Thus, when fully conscious of the reason, and wholly voluntarily, I abandoned *Frederick*, for which I was more nourished by the political life than I ever was, and undertook *Siegfried*, to make more exactly and with more surety that which I wished, I entered into a new and definite development of artist and man: that (period) of the conscious will of pursuing a completely new way, into which I had entered, impelled by an unconscious necessity, and which led me, as man and as artist, towards a new world.'" *Translated from NOUFLARD, 'Wagner d'après lui-même,'* vol. i. p. 265.

This displays, in Wagner's own words, the course of his development towards his great ideal. From *Rienzi* to *Rheingold* or *Siegfried* is a *great change*, both poetically and musically. The repudiation of the historico-political drama for the drama founded on pure myth was a very important step. A historical plot is almost sure to suggest the idea of *reality*—therefore it is unfitted to Music. The way in which the idea that a plot is 'historical' affects the mind may be observed in the way novels are approached by the average reader. People like a 'historical' romance because "it is real." To denominate a plot as 'historical' is to give a voucher for the 'reality' of the action. The reader is led to feel that he is hearing events related as they actually occurred, and hence he may believe more strongly in the narrative than if it proposed to be no more than poetic fancy. But the disadvantage of such an attitude towards the Music-Drama is that the critical spirit of the listener is aroused, and the drama is obliged to conform to the natural laws which belief demands from that which proposes to present an accurate imitation of actual life. The attention of the mind is thereby called to the falsity of the situation of a historical action accompanied by *Music* (which was *not* present in the real events nor in the novel founded upon them), as well as to any poetical flights which the dramatist may have allowed himself. We feel sure that Henry VIII. did not employ musical dialogue, and, further, that any ideally beautiful situations did not belong to the actual life in which he played a part. Likewise, the historical character *Rienzi* can hardly pose before us as employing a musical diction in his daily life.

The gradual determination of the proper field for Poetry that took place in Wagner's mind is very interesting, for it was due to his musical capabilities, which, like a 'good angel purified his taste from false ideals.' However, unlyrical Poetry will probably continue to flourish—didactic poetry, rhymed prose and 'occasional' poetry—and, for aught we can help, bad 'ballad' Music also. Cf. narrational Betsy of popular songs and recitations, which narrate some hairbreadth escape or victory of good over evil. The foregoing considerations regarding subject-matter as an important feature of Poetry apply, not only to the Music-Drama, but to Poetry in general, and very seriously to latter-day poetry in general.

(Cf. the difficulties of the modern painter in treating *historical* scenes, battles, etc. Note also how difficult it is not to awaken ill-feelings on the part of the spectators towards pictures of the doings of a man as near us as Napoleon. Also the difficulties of the narrative poet in treating such subjects.)

*Higher Realism*, i.e. the *vividness* of real occurrences in an idealistic sphere.—The degree of reality which we demand from a work of art depends largely upon our attitude towards the work. If the work *proposes* to present an imitation of a natural object, it thereby challenges our attitude of keen criticism towards the degree of accuracy of imitation attained by the work. (Cf. the 'Small Arts.')

But if it be understood that a work of art does *not propose* to imitate a natural object, but to present some poetic fancy, then our judgment of the imitative accuracy is not called for, and we are left free to enjoy the impressions of the poetic fancy. In this respect the work of art may be compared to a beautiful dream. We do not find fault with it because it was not an accurate imitation of the play of cause and effect which we are accustomed to in our waking life. In fact the kind of belief which the work of art calls for may be illustrated by the dream. While we are dreaming we may believe firmly in the reality of the visions which pass before us, *although the order* of these states of consciousness be entirely opposed to the order of our sensations while awake. So the work of art may not demand that we should believe it presents something which actually happened at some past date, but only that we should vividly experience the *present* reality of the work as a *work of art*. Here we may recognise the efficiency of Music in adding to the *present* reality of the work before us. Music insures our belief by adding to the visual and other sensations its *own* vivid sensations. Music is pre-eminently an intensely vivid and impelling stimulus. It forcibly attacks the ear and compels the attention of the mind by its vividly present and monopolising character. Like the dream, Music so monopolises the field of attention by its vivid sensations that the mind is prevented from criticising the reality of the visions presented to it. The Music-Drama, then, must evade the criticism of non-conformity to actual life by not *proposing* to present an imitation of the familiar aspects of life, and by making the sense-impressions of the spectator as vivid and engaging as possible.

It may be insinuated that, if the Music-Drama is such an artificial compound that it cannot imitate accurately the aspects of everyday life, then it *cannot affect us*. In this assertion the fact is overlooked that the *emotions are real ones*, although the accompaniments of the actions and outer aspects are not like those we are familiar with. The identity of the *emotions* serves to connect us with forms of the past, in whatever dress they may be presented, and with the artistic creations of the past. We have already shown how the power of Drama may be intensified by the addition of Music; we have seen how Music which pretends to anything like expressing distinct emotions is not only aided by the presence of the Stage, but absolutely *requires* it.

The difficulty in the Music-Drama is that the Music requires *Idealism*, the Drama a certain amount of *reality*. The 'Opera' erred in having a *realistic* plot (opposed to Music)

and unnatural *expression* (opposed to the Drama). It was neither one nor the other. It often presented the outer aspects of everyday life, but the Music belied their reality. The *Spoken Drama* can be more realistic since it can employ ordinary speech for its dialogue.

The miraculous has its place in Art whenever art-works do *not propose* to present an imitation of real life, but an idealistic action. However, the objectively miraculous ought to be symbolical, as the poisoning of the spear over the head of Parsifal (as the victor over temptation—now able to wield supernatural strength).

A religious plot may spontaneously *require* miracle. See the admirable instance of the growth of the *Pope's staff* in *Tannhäuser*. God forgave by a miracle what the Pope condemned by that very staff. Likewise the Grail, *Parsifal*, *Lohengrin*.

In a certain sense there are miracles happening every day: cf. the case of Elizabeth (*Tannhäuser*, ii. sc. 2). To demonstrate 'cause and effect' in phenomena does not obliterate the miraculous, for we do not know why the effect is the result of the cause which lies *between* the cause and the effect. In modern science we record a bond between two phenomena of that nature that they never occur apart. But *why* one is so bound by the other is just as much a mystery as ever. It is a most remarkable *fact* that, when we have observed a phenomenon a number of times, we seem to *understand* it. That feeling of contempt which results when we feel a surety about the phenomena is like that which results when we say we *know* a thing or 'understand' it. It is thus with the falling of a stone. But the miracle is still there as far as explanation is concerned, although the phenomenon seems perfectly clear to us. Is it not a most startling thing that, whereas in our whole experience we have been used to a body moving only when moved by some other body, that here, or anywhere on the earth's surface, any body unaided begins to move towards the earth of its own accord, and yet we can trace no solid medium (like air) blowing it towards the earth? So when Wagner is criticised for employing the legend, on the plea that we of the nineteenth century can have no 'feeling' where miracles are concerned, simply shows that we do not recognise the *real* miraculousness of those phenomena which Wagner merely *symbolises* in a purely miraculous phenomenon, as the 'cup' in *Tristan*, which merely enforces a phenomenon which, though 'natural,' ought to be astounding, did we not become blunted to the familiar.

As regards the possibility of a modern poet dealing with the miraculous, the *Jason* of William Morris and the works of Wagner may be mentioned, and the following quotation from Philip Gilbert Hamerton will hold both for poet and spectator of Music-Drama, although originally relating to the attitude of painters towards religious subjects.

"There is belief enough here for the purposes of arts, and the vividness of the poetic faith is repeatedly proved by the poet's vision of the 'holy thing' on those very rare occasions when it appears to the most pure. Even a creed of this poetical kind contains a strong element of sincerity. The modern thinker is not remote from ancestors who thoroughly believed in supernatural visitations: he inherits a strong tendency to believe which is checked by scientific severity concerning evidence. This severity can only be agreeable to the most disciplined intellects, and it is agreeable even to them only in their hours of self-restraint. Poetry and painting come to them as a deliverance from Science, and from the terrible absolutism of regularity that pervades all natural laws. They give liberty to the imagination, and the most frequent use that it makes of this liberty is to fly back instinctively to an earlier time, and make itself young again."

The very height of 'Idealism' would be the purely supernatural Drama made up of 'miraculous' situations throughout. But just in this complete removal from the conditions of ordinary life it ceases to accord with the condition, imposed by 'emotional' Music, that it should be *emotional*. It might satisfy our demand for *pictorial* beauty, but it would fail to interest our dramatic spirit, which requires emotional threads like those with which we are familiar. The *capacity* of Music for emotional expression would be

sacrificed, and the absorbing dramatic element of the situations would be lacking. Here we are met again by the fitness of a combination of Music with Dramatic Poetry. The most fanciful fairy tale even does not renounce some agreement with the natural impulses of human beings. The Music-Drama requires unfamiliarity in *outward* aspects of life only, not in the emotions entering into the 'inner' development of the Drama. (Cf. p. 14.)

*Sculpture* is an instance of an 'imitative' Art which, to a great extent, avoids the imitation of the *outward aspects of everyday life*, and *gains in beauty* thereby. It also chooses particular phases of life—like the reposeful attitude of the *statue* as opposed to 'action' represented in a painting or bas-relief, or in a sensational 'group.' Cf. nautical and military sensationalism in statuary and bas-relief, particularly in modern tomb-sculpture in St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey.

The *pediment* of a Grecian Temple is an instance of *Idealism* in the above sense. The disposition of figures is subordinated to the shape of the enclosing 'frame' which is determined by the Architecture, not by Sculpture, or the conditions of everyday life. Consider also the effect of crinoline sculptured, or the silk hat in a bust. Try to imagine vividly a long row of 'Atlantes' supporting an entablature upon chimney-pot hats, and otherwise dressed in modern street costume. Good existing subjects for testing such effects are displayed in Italian cemeteries (Genoa, &c.), where skirts with frills and lace are painstakingly reproduced in marble. Note also that *good* Sculpture does not attempt in detail the representation of hair. It can also renounce any attempts at naturalistic 'tinting.' In fact, much more about the Style of the Music-Drama can be learned from *Sculpture* than from Painting, or from the modern *genre-stage*.

We do not cast iron stoves in the form of a man, although a stove in human form might be heralded as one of the 'striking novelties' of modern Art, and applauded by the critics as displaying 'wonderful anatomy' and 'absolute fidelity to Nature.'

Draw a contrast between the designs of flags in the Middle Ages, and the attempted Naturalism of the coats-of-arms of the various States composing the United States of America (represented in a page of woodcuts appended to the American edition of Webster's Dictionary), and you will appreciate this phase of justifiable "unnaturalness" in some arts. Coins and medals sometimes display absurd attempts at landscape painting and perspective.

There are two great fields that Art-effort cultivates. Taking the Arts in their totality they display two great methods by which man seeks to gratify certain tastes. Some kinds of art-works *represent* something existing outside of themselves in nature or human life. Other kinds of art-works *present* something pleasing in themselves. In this difference between *representation* and *presentation* lies a 'dramatic moment' for Art. The basis of the differentiation of activity lies in the differences between the material and psychical means and qualities of the Arts whereby one Art is fitted for the activity of *representing* and another of *presenting*. At the two extremes lie the realistic novel and genre-play on the one hand, and mosaic-work, stained glass, textiles, Architecture, and Music on the other hand. There are some Arts which are somewhat intermediate. Music, strangely enough, is capable of touching both fields to a limited extent, inasmuch as it can cultivate the purely presentative field in formal Music, and the quasi-representative field in arousing mental images derived from life and nature.



Music does not render Tragedy *stronger* perhaps, but it is a most admirable device for rendering it more *beautiful*, more pleasant. But just as the 'religious subject' has served painters as a means of getting away from realistic criticism to an *ideal* region where they were *master*, and could make *costumes*, faces, etc., as *beautiful* as they *liked*, without exciting adverse criticism on grounds of imitative naturalism or terrestrial probability, so the *Style* of Drama required for the *Music-Drama* is that of the *myth* or *ideal* action, with its corresponding setting, etc.

Architecture is a good example of an Art which strives to attain beautiful and noble effects, without striving for melodramatic intensity, or any 'deceptive' imitation of the aspects of human life. Some such example is needed to make clear to us how an art-work may be beautiful without overcoming us through dramatic intensity. The Music-Drama differentiates itself from independent Drama, by the inclusion of the effects of two Arts, Music and Painting, which are pre-eminently Arts of simple sensuous beauty. The *Style* of the Music-Drama, therefore, will partake of the qualities of these included elements: it will be less emotionally intense than that of independent Drama, but it will be more sensuously beautiful and exalted. Being compulsorily removed from intensely fixing our interest on its dramatic element by its necessity of renouncing Naturalism, it should seek its recompense in cultivating the qualities which render it peculiar and pre-eminent—its musical and pictorial character.

A Grecian temple might have been rendered more dramatic by making each column represent a dying gladiator, or a moribund Amazon, but it seems unlikely that the gain in dramatic intensity would have excelled the effect of the pure, formal beauty of the temple with Doric columns. Many a modern machine-made rug would be more *beautiful*, were it less *dramatic*.

It will be seen from this what is meant by 'Style' in general. Style is the perfect agreement or harmony for a certain end between the parts of a work of art.

Thus in the 'Doric' Style of Grecian Architecture, all the constructive and decorative features are in such harmony, that no one of them can be replaced by some corresponding feature of the 'Gothic' Style without injuring the effect.

'Realistic' Drama and the Music-Drama aim at two different general effects. The spectator 'enters into' the realistic Drama—it is absorbing in its dramatic interest, it is exciting. The Music of the Music-Drama adds a sensuously pleasing factor which leads it to be listened to more for its own sake than for the sake of what it represents. As a general rule in Art, the more an art-work becomes directly 'presentative' in its nature, the more it is looked at *for itself* aside from that which it may represent.

In other words; *Music* can make a drama more *beautiful*—more *pleasant* by its continual presence—but the *only kind of drama* that will tolerate being rendered more pleasant is one of an *idealistic* nature (such as mythical actions, etc.). Such can be rendered as *beautiful* as possible without making them *ridiculous*. The fault of the Italian composers of operas was not in writing so sweetly, so simply, but that they *did not have an action* for their dramas which *allowed* this—they were dealing with a realistic form of Drama, often with the most appalling and thrilling events imitated from our modern life. (Cf. Verdi's *Traviata*.)

It is strange that Music can make a drama which is already ideal, still

more ideal, by *snatching the whole work* from adverse criticism according to everyday models of life as we see it. The very presence of such an artificial element as Music totally disarms the mind, so that the whole work is snatched from the jaws of the adverse criticism which snaps at every detail of dress and manner that presents itself in the guise which the mind is accustomed to in everyday life. Our devouring eye samples everything which passes before it, and subjects it to an inexorable judgment, according to the *fashion*, viz., to that which it is used to. The cut of the trousers or the shape of the stiff hat—one glance is capable of condemning both features (and individual!). But put actors in dresses which we are not used to, like those worn a thousand years or more ago, and the eye is disarmed, criticism of minutiae in 'cut' is not challenged, for we lack the criterion in our mind's eye, as well as the gnawing motive to criticise. (Cf. effect of employment of archaic words in Poetry, p. 124.)

Some of the chief faults of the works of poets as a whole may be attributed to the fact that some poets were masters of the exalted *diction* without being able to create the exalted basis (action) for their diction; others were able to create the exalted conceptions without being able to forge a style exalted enough to express them properly. Many a 'poet' would find prose quite adequate to express all his conceptions quite fittingly, and many a prose writer might give the world the full enjoyment of his lofty conceptions were he able to frame them in fitting language.

Now it is possible that the best poet in both respects might reach a limit where words would be too coarse to express the meaning. Schuré remarks that many parts of Goethe's *Faust* demand Music for their full completeness; especially the ending of the second part where an ideal region of thought is reached that cannot be expressed in words. The superiority of Music over words may perhaps be attributed to the essential differences between Music and Language. The employment of words to convey ideas pre-supposes something to be expressed lying within the field of expressibility covered by language. But language withal has been developed in deference to other ends than Poetry, in fact poetical application of language may be said to be a parasitical application of an instrument (speech) designed for other ends (pre-eminently *practical* ends). Now the very nature of the highly ideal in Poetry is that it so far departs from the subject-matter of the real world that there is a very flimsy basis for expression in words (predominantly designed for the expression of the concrete and real world). Hence language fails in dealing with the transcendently sensuous. (A simile for this is the undefined character displayed by words in Philosophy expressing very general ideas.) Especially is the impotence of expression of language felt in respect of *emotions*. Withal the field of language as a whole has come to be the expression of *relations* among things, etc. But an emotion in itself presents a certain homogeneous character that is hardly to be expressed in terms of relations. A look, a gesture, a movement, a modulation in the voice, may express an

emotion better than complex articulation of sounds in words. In the matter of *higher* emotions, their subtlety transcends language and we seek refuge in Music almost spontaneously. In fact, speech under the influence of strong emotion may become utterly unintelligible (cf. inarticulate exclamations under stress of strong feeling, and disastrous effect of strong excitement upon a 'set-piece,' and, on the other hand, the predominance of the 'grammatical' element where no emotion is at stake, as in a scientific treatise). What we *feel* is often not comparable to anything which we see or *reason* about. Efforts to embody the highest ideas of God or beauty in language often end in no more than indefinite sensuous suggestions. Now Music partakes of these two characters, it is far removed from the concrete experiences of everyday life, and vague sensuous or emotional suggestiveness is its field rather than ratiocination. Often that which the artist or poet *suspicious* is far too vague and emotional to form the basis for clear intellectual realisation, or well defined lingual expression. Some language is needed to express those vague feelings that transcend concrete experience or the clear conception of 'relations.' Like the highest generalisations of Philosophy—"matter," "motion," "God," etc., they are inconceivable. But Music offers an adapted mode of expressing the shadowy intuitions of a deeply and finely emotional soul. There is hardly any limit to the vague suggestive power of Music. Its very disability in the matter of expressing definite concrete ideas with great security for a large number of people is its *power* in the possibilities of vague suggestions.

"The meaning of song goes deep. Who is there that in logical words can express the effect Music has upon us? A kind of inarticulate, unfathomable speech which leads us to the edge of the infinite, and lets us for moments gaze into that."—*Carlyle*.

The Music-Drama is especially fitted to deal with the loftier themes of man, whereas it is excelled by some other Arts in respect to capacity of dealing with the more commonplace traits. Hence the Music-Drama should occupy itself especially with the highest—the loftiest works of the phantasy; it should propose to shine as a *high* Art rather than as a *Genre*-Art merely, or as one of the 'Small Arts.' (Cf. *Quality*, B, p. 25.)

It is as if a sculptor has an exceedingly large and beautiful block of marble on which to exercise his skill. Shall he waste the material on a subject which is merely 'pretty'? or shall he not rather take a subject which is more worthy of such a material—a grand and lofty conception, a noble figure, dignified, expressive of all that is highest and most godlike in man, the body displaying physical beauty, the countenance reflecting the nobility and intellectual power of the mind governing it?

Thus we augment our idea of the Style of the Music-Drama by two ideas:—(1) Unlikeness to the outer aspects of our everyday life; and (2) pre-eminently a *lofty* Art. These will be enlarged upon in the following pages. For this purpose we first need a more detailed and definite idea of the qualities of Music than that divulged in this chapter.

## CHAPTER II.

## QUALITIES OF MUSIC.

**D** MUSIC is perhaps the most artificial of all the Arts, viz. it does not, as Pictures and Drama do, base itself on any of the outer aspects of life. It has no prototype in Nature, such as Painting, Sculpture, Drama and Poetry have, nor, like Architecture, is it essentially associated with the useful. It is pre-eminently a purely human fiction, and is not designed to imitate the outer appearances of Nature. A very good Art to compare Music to (in the matter of artificiality) is the purely decorative employment of colours. A single note may be compared to a single coloured space, a chord to a harmonious disposition of different colours. Modern orchestral Music is parasitical on the nature of our sense of hearing, and has no essential connection with the outer aspects of Nature. It is interesting to view Music in this extreme artificial contrast with other Arts, because we can then see the difficulties offered by a compound-art that proposes to *unite Music* with an Art—the Stage—which is most palpably founded on the aspects of life and nature. We can then appreciate why the Music-Drama as a separate Art has had such a struggle to unite the disparate Arts upon which it is founded—to found a Style—a harmonious union.

Music stands alone among the Arts, and this is perhaps why it is capable of achieving some effects better than other Arts can. Music is said to be the most *ideal* Art. It is the furthest removed from objective nature. Aside from a few semi-naturalistic imitations of phenomena like thunder or the shriek of a human voice, the harmonies and melodies of Music are entirely foreign to the auricular experiences even of everyday life. Far from the 'imitative' Arts, Music revels in an artificial region of its own. The pictorial artist copies—or more or less distantly takes his ideas from—natural objects. Even the decorative artist touches nature when he derives his *motif* for ornament from natural objects, and a great deal of non-naturalistic decoration has been referred in its origin to the development of one-time semblances of natural objects. But the composer of Music has few direct suggestions in nature of the harmonies and melodies which arise in his mind. (Were it otherwise, how much easier it would be for some composers to compose!) The vast mineral kingdom ~~grovels~~ grovels in silence. Sound in the vegetable kingdom is largely sporadic.

'Conceptions' have no audible qualities. For audible qualities we naturally turn to animals. Lions roar, monkeys chatter, parrots squall, cats miauw, rooks caw, bees hum, and birds chirp and warble, etc. But Music really does none of these things. To speak of birds 'singing' is to employ 'singing' in a very metaphorical sense, for there is little of this singing that is reconcilable with modern orchestral *Music*. Musical composition is a singularly *human* activity; and the result is a highly *artificial* product.

Sound, in its removal from our everyday life of perception, may be compared to the sense of *smell*. We can say very little about a fragrance, although the sensation may be very distinct, very delicate, and give us extreme gratification. The sensations in both cases may monopolise attention without having any life-preserving function. In fact, as compared with the lower animals in the matter of life-preserving functions, man has largely elated the sense of sight and allowed the senses of hearing and smell to become rudimentary in their activity. Likewise the Art of Music has not the utilitarian implications of Architecture or of the Small Arts. Even the mode of creation in musical composing betrays the extremely *artificial* character of Music as compared with the other Arts. The painter and sculptor are largely concerned in producing what has already *appeared to them* from their contemplation of Nature. The composer, on the contrary, evokes harmonies and melodies from his head, having absolutely no model in Nature. His product—Music—is truly a *creation*. Music, taken in its total development, is more truly a product of pure *mental* activity than any of the Arts. Perhaps this is why its higher development was so tardy. Forms, shapes, distances, colours and tastes we are ever and all familiar with in the life-preserving activities of everyday life. But the realm of artificial sounds and their combinations—the sphere of harmony and melody—is intensely ideal, viz. *artificial*—removed from the outer aspects of contemporary life.

The sensations aroused by listening to Music are as far separated from that which pertains to the intellect as an emotion is from intellectual activity. The antithesis between the visible world and the world of sound may be strikingly compared to that antithesis which exists between the world of the intellect and the world of emotions. It is probably upon this analogous antithesis that Schopenhauer's theory of the nature of Music is based, and it deserves a more detailed examination.

If the 'Imitative Arts' arouse the emotions, or suggest emotions, it is by symbols derived from the external world. The mind of the spectator (cf. Painting) is compelled to infer the emotion from its objective suggestion, as from a grouping of objects, or a gesture, or an expression represented; in somewhat the same way, as we infer 'a body' by contemplating a *surface*, we infer emotion from contemplating its natural circumstances. Likewise in Dramatic Art: the language employed is a symbol

D

merely, which requires the intervention of the intellect for its interpretation, and consequently suffers some diminution of force therein. But Music appeals almost directly to the emotions, for it is 'presentative' as an Art, and requires no intellectual interpretation such as that called for by language. Thus in Philosophy—the Pictorial and Plastic Arts have been looked upon as the *phenomena* of emotion, while Music was viewed as the '*noumenon*'—as emotion itself. "Music gives us the germ of life without the forms of its appearance, the passions without their causal motives, Nature without covering." The eye perceives, not only colour, but also forms, size, location, shape, texture, etc.

In looking at the actors on a stage, and the scenery, our *intellects* are busied in the interpretation of the actions and conformations, expressions, etc., that we see. But those outward actions are not to be confounded with the sentiments and *emotions* underlying them, of which the actors are conscious in their minds. If we wished to find a representation of these *emotions* as distinguished from the physical facts (configurations of matter, and changes thereof), which we *see*, we might well find the desired *antithetical representative* in *Music*, which does not affect the eye at all, nor does it appeal to the mind by the activity of the intellect, but is a distinct *sensation*, and a sensation which is so foreign to the impressions of *everyday life* that it does not suggest the world of sights and scenes, but the entirely different world of *feelings*, of states of consciousness in which there are no *dimensions* concerned, no time measurements, and so very far removed from the processes of *reasoning*. We must see clearly that *emotions* have no *objective* existence which can be apprehended by us—that emotions are not "*objects*," that they are wholly unlike the "things which we see," although they may be excited thereby. "The feelings as emotions," are confined to the *mind* (to the organ of mind, the brain?), and cannot be *seen by others* directly, although the "feelings" of a person may be *inferred* or deduced by another person from the *actions* of the person, provided such actions are like those which have been by experience found to be associated with certain emotions. "Sights" being then the aspects in which everyday life presents itself to us, and emotions being entirely a hidden or an "inner life," if we would express these emotions in their most *peculiar* form to other persons, we should preserve their ideal, hidden or *inner* character, and Music is excellently adapted to this purpose, for Music cannot be *seen*, is unreal or *ideal*, in the sense that it does not enter into Nature, or into life without Art, and hence it preserves that peculiar character which makes it a fit representative of feelings. Music is certainly more like the feelings of the mind than muscular contractions are, viz.: Music is a better mode of informing the minds of the audience of the emotions which the minds of the actors are experiencing, than anything the actors may do that the audience can *see*, i.e. is visible. (Cf. reference to Verdi's *Otello* on p. 4.)

It is absolutely necessary to recognise the difference between *emotions* and 'perceptions'; we transfer our sensations of form, colour, etc., to something *outside* of us, and predicate a world of objects which would exist if *we were absent*, or all human life even ceased to exist. But we recognise that "feelings" or emotions are something peculiarly *human*, inasmuch as they are conditioned by the *existence* of a feeling subject. We are not necessary to the objective existence of the inorganic world, but we *are* necessary to the existence of subjective or mental processes such as *emotions* or acts of volition. On the other hand, we picture the emotions as capable of being felt in the absence of the world of objects.

Music on the part of the hearer is made up of *sensations*, as acting is made up of sensations (on the part of the audience); but the sensations of Music *differ* from the sensations of the eye from the objective world, to an extent corresponding to the difference between the world of visual sensations and the 'inner world' of *emotions*. We have only to represent by a mental effort, '*sensations*' and '*emotions*,' to recognise how entirely different the two divisions of mental activity are, and we are always conscious of the existence of a world of objects which is outside of ourselves, and equally conscious of the inner world of emotions which we alone feel, and which have no existence outside of ourselves (i.e. outside of our minds). This is the way in which the world seems to present itself to us. Whether such a view is philosophically tenable does not enter into the case.

Again, consider the world of "will." We recognise how different the act of volition is from either feelings or *sensations*, although the two latter may enter into the act of volition. There is a continual *consciousness* of a power of willing which we possess, which power the inorganic objects about us do not possess. Whether this feeling be philosophically *justified* or not does not enter into consideration here, the *fact* is that such a consciousness on the part of human beings *does exist*. Moreover, we identify this power of willing particularly with artistic *creation* (cf. Fine Arts—not only products of human activity, but further, of mental activity), hence the vulgar astonishment at the power of a musician to compose original works *far from any* musical instrument, such as a piano. The musician *creates* to a greater extent than the painter. If Music, in its character, is so thoroughly an offspring of the human "will," so, conversely, the "will" finds its best representative in Music. The process of an act of volition being personal and mental, is not visible or objective, and may therefore find its fittest expression in Music, which is also purely subjective (in the sense of mental) and without visible attributes of dimensions, colour, etc. That an act of volition has occurred in a person's mind may be made evident by his subsequent action, which is *visible*, but the act of *volition* itself, in its *invisible* character as a mental process, is better suggested by *Music*.

A drama, then, may be conceived as consisting of two parts, which correspond to an "inner" fabric of desires, emotions, feelings, and the objectification of these in the speech and acting of the personages. The distinction is roughly indicated by the fact that very often the two rivers—feeling and expression—do not correspond, as where a personage hides his inner feelings and speaks falsely or hypocritically. The inner life is the web of impulses, desires, emotions, affections, feelings, and acts of

volition, which underlie all that we see and hear upon the stage. It is that which we 'hunt out' from the *expression* of it by the actors. We cannot feel this psychic web itself, for it is confined to the minds of the 'persons' of the drama, simulated by the actors.

If one takes the first act of *Tristan and Isolde*, and writes in two separate columns the corresponding occurrences of (1) the mental or inner world; (2) the outward world (or what is *seen*), a far more vivid idea will be obtained of this antithesis than can be conveyed by words. Notice that 'if in doubt' the *Music* of this work may often aid us in divining the 'inner' occurrences.

D Wagner was led to the "appreciation of the proper field of Poetry" by his good angel—Music. With regard to the Music-Drama, differing from text makers in that he was a *musician*, he was protected from the intellectual egotism which misleads men of poetic nature to expend their forces in the (for them) unfit field of teaching, of serving up messes of learning, subtly scientific or religious, for the minds of the people. His education was of such a free nature that his emotional nature was not completely extirpated by an army of learned thoughts; his sensibility was not atrophied by a one-sided cultivation of his intellect; his natural and true feelings were not suppressed and veiled by a "pride of knowledge." (Cf. the 'classical' poets.) Music alone cannot express cause or object. To express anything beyond vague pathos, Music must be associated with words. Wagner's command of musical composition allowed him to think in Music instead of thinking on the composing of it; hence when his impulse towards the greater and more characteristic expression led him to the addition of words, the union naturally occurred at that point where the poet only would have felt the need of some form of language speaking *directly* to the *sensibility*, i.e. without the intermediation of the *intellect*, and that point is where the subject is of such an *emotional* nature that it may be compared to 'waves of emotion.' This is Poetry which appeals to the sensibility and *not* the intellect of men, and hence Wagner was led by his musical feeling to the Poetry which is real and true, that which expresses "that which in man is purely *human*, unalloyed by all convention."

The two critical points which made such a compound Art possible are: that the organ of speech may also be employed as a musical instrument; that Music is more or less naturally associable with our emotions. The first point renders musical dialogue possible; the second renders dramatic Music possible. Why the combination of Music and the Stage was *expedient* has already been dealt with. Historically, the difficulty arose when it became necessary to practically solve the *manner* in which the combination should be effected, in the details of combining harmoniously. Had the compound Art undergone a long and slow *organic* development, the Style



might have developed itself by numerous slow cumulative efforts—but the development of the modern Opera devolved especially on the efforts of certain *individuals*, and the Arts which personal effort tried to unite had suffered long and separate development, so that they had become divorced to the extreme.

The modern Opera did not arise as the product of an organic development, it was a sudden and compulsory marriage of two Arts which had undergone separate development. Compromise on the part of each Art was demanded, but was not ceded. The very mode of origin of the Opera was unfortunate.

(A) Lofty poetic diction in direct discourse requires *Music* to make it completely evident that it *is* an ideal world, as much as Music needs Poetry or a poetic situation or scene to make its vague language express a distinct phase of pathos. It is very difficult to raise a reader from the commonplace of everyday life to the ideal world suddenly. When the poet merely *describes* any scene or action, his diction is felt to be that which *he* designed to accompany his own lofty perceptions—and hence seems natural. But when a modern or a historical character, or any character postulated as real in time and space, is presented by the poet as speaking in a high-flown poetical diction, the effect is liable to be like that of the ‘supe’ who speaks as a god. A poet may take almost any phase of modern emotion and *describe* it in discourse as lofty as he likes, but when he represents *modern* characters speaking in a direct discourse savouring of the celestial regions, the effect is liable to be ridiculous. The fact is that our minds are very quick to detect affectation and unnatural ‘situations,’ and hence require careful treatment to throw them off the scent. It requires Music to keep the mind up to the proper tone for accepting as natural and not affected a high-flown diction. One trouble with second-rate modern poets who scribble for the newspapers is that they employ the wings of an (imitated!) lofty diction while *walking* on the earth of modern life. Their *diction* soars, but their subject-matter is *modern clay*. (Cf. pp. 55 and 122.)

It is one of the marks of Wagner’s genius that he could conceive so many strictly *musical* situations as occur in his works, situations which would be impossible or improbable *without* Music, but which are *peculiarly* beautiful as represented *with* Music. The closing scene of *Walküre* may be instanced as a scene which might occasion nothing but ridicule if acted merely as pantomime. It is the glorious Music which casts an artistic halo about the whole scene, and prevents its sinking to a parody. In this respect Music acts like a tonic which prevents the mind from seeing ideal situations with the eyes of ridicule and critical derision. It is like a religious sentiment that prevents a reader or listener from discerning anything vulgar in the sacred books. (Cf. Higher Realism, p. 13.)

(B) The second quality of Music is that it is an Art dealing in *pleasant* combinations of tones; it plays directly on our senses, and consequently is intolerable when not prevailingly pleasant. It is not like Arts which do

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B not play directly on the sense-organs (cf. C *infra*) and which make capital out of scenes of wretchedness and suffering, as Literature does. Artists would hardly have worked so hard on Music as they have, if it had been a pain-producing agency. Those flowers are cultivated mostly which have a pleasant odour. There is much in life which will not mix well with Music, but, as this is generally rejected by the dramatist, a more important consideration for us is that Music is pre-eminently capable of the very loftiest effects, and that therefore the Drama which will be most transfigured by Music will be the *loftiest* Style of Drama.

One may say Music is the most highly *Æsthetic* among the Arts. It is either pleasing or cannot be called Music in an art-sense. Other arts such as Drama, novels and even Painting can somewhat ignore the sensuously pleasing *Æsthetic* qualities: some Arts because they do not offer direct *stimuli*, such as the 'representative' Arts; others because they have a 'pathetic' interest that recompenses them for a lack of sensuously pleasing elements (novels, genre-dramas, paintings, which present pathetic scenes). To occasion suffering is not the field of Music as an Art, and it is inconsistent with a situation presenting abject misery trending on the unæsthetic (dirt). The tendency now in musical circles, probably owing to the long desired relief from highly artificial constraint of pedantry, is to deny any limits to the extent of modulation, etc. One sign of the tendency is that concert programmes are largely occupied, not by 'independent Music,' but by excerpts from works not written for concert performance. It is probable that freedom of modulation is subjected to certain broad limits such as are founded upon our nervous system and sense-organs. It is not sufficient to say that familiarity will make *anything* pleasing. Taking the Arts as a whole it seems probable that there are certain empirical limits to the expediency of forcing *discord* in tone and in colour.

As regards the much belaboured audacity of modulation of R. Wagner, it may be remarked that (1) people had too exclusively confined themselves to a certain class of Music (that of the Italian Opera composers), and were consequently not prepared for anything so different as the Music of Wagner's later works (personal experience); (2) there was much professional envy at work; (3) it was not so much the orchestral Music that was aggravating as the subordination of the *prima donna*, etc., in Wagner's works as compared with those of Bellini, etc.; (4) a most important point (and one of personal experience), Wagner's works undoubtedly suffered very much from recriminations that arose from poor performances of his works. I have myself heard *Tristan and Isolde* outrageously given, both as regards the vocal and instrumental rendering. And it is easy to imagine how this could arise, for after all, the world has been obliged to train itself in Music during the last fifty years of the popularising of Music. Leaders of orchestras and singers have developed themselves under the *régime* of far more exacting Music than was formerly performed. Public demand has compelled leaders of orchestras who wrote common-place waltzes to work up the Music to *Tristan*, and 'poor' singers have been compelled to lay aside dramatic tricks and bravoure-antics, and undertake all a new training in a much more difficult musical direction than before. That performances should not have displayed *Style* is no wonder. To expect an orchestra to render discords properly and clearly when they just barely rendered the open chords accurately was too much. Many times if one had not been familiar with the way the Music was rendered in conscientious performances of Wagner's works, he would have asserted that here was an abuse of the rights of a composer. A subsequent hearing of a first-class performance would dissipate all such ideas. *Wagner's Music* (in spite of careful marks of expression) is about what is made of it when the oboist, and fagottist, and trombonist get hold of it.

(C) The third quality of Music is its intensely 'presentative' character,\* C  
as contrasted with the permanent duration of pictures and sculpture, and

\* This is a very useful conception in Art-Philosophy, and the reader is recommended to grasp the idea firmly and clearly if he has not already done so. It is analogous to the basis of classification, both of cognitions and feelings, given by Herbert Spencer in his *Psychology*, vol. ii. p. 513, in which the scale of division runs: (1) presentative; (2) presentative-representative; (3) representative; (4) re-representative, an ascending scale which is momentous as regards the nature of the Music-Drama (see p. 126), and of Æsthetic contemplation in general as distinguished from intellectual activity. 'Presentative' is here employed in the sense of 'capable of direct apprehension as opposed to representation.' Thus Music, Architecture and the Decorative Arts are pre-eminently 'presentative'; they *present* something directly to our sense-organs—something that is enjoyable in itself without reference to similar past experiences. On the other hand, Literature does not present anything to us comparable to that which it 'represents.' (Cf. p. 90.) It works through phonetic symbols which are not at all the images they stand for and arouse. It is evident that in the latter case the mind of the percipient supplies its own 'images,' viz. must to a certain extent manufacture the art-work itself from the instigation of the symbols supplied by the writer. Literature presupposes a stock of available 'images,' and the susceptibility to stimulation thereof through something entirely unlike them. In this sense, Architecture, Sculpture, Music, and Painting are more 'universal' in their capacity for apprehension than Literature, which is limited in its apprehension to a knowledge of the symbols, i.e. of the words and expressions in which it is framed. The former are more direct or presentative in the sense that there is less mental toggery of cognition between the object presented and the apprehending mind, than there is in the case of Literature. The latter point comes out strongly when the Literature is a foreign one to us and we are beginners in the language, Goethe's *Faust* in the original for instance.

Lessing's *Laocoon* was an application of the conception of 'presentative' *versus* 'representative' to the demarcation of the fields of Sculpture (and the Pictorial Arts) and Literature respectively. The idea is of much wider application, however, especially if combined with the second part of our conception—that of 'immediate'—which renders it vastly more important for application to the Music-Drama.

'Immediate' also refers to the relative directness or remoteness of apprehension. Thus Music not only presents direct stimuli to the sense-organ of hearing, but also presents its stimuli for a moment only. It is so highly presentative that it is strictly 'local in time,' and does not admit of that extended contemplation which is possible in the case of an art-work not thus limited—as a painting or a temple. Music is a 'passing' Art; it exists only while changing. Its stimuli do not persist like those "permanent possibilities of stimulation" paintings and statues. Its stimuli must be felt and enjoyed upon the moment without possibility of stopping them, returning upon the track, or reversing the order of succession. This often strikes one forcibly in listening to the performance of a symphony, the irreclaimable 'ever-relapsing into the past' of the tones. We cannot 'remove our ears' for the nonce, revel in a little side-play of the imagination, and returning catch the tones where we set out upon the excursion. Music brooks no drooping or distraction of the attention under pain of unconsciousness of the tones, i.e. non-existence of the Music. It is a 'dynamical' art *par excellence* as opposed to the statical art-works of Painting, Sculpture, Architecture. How we can linger over a novel, make excursions of the fancy and take up the thread again! Music is inexorably despotic in its exactions and brooks no simultaneous rival. This then is the momentous quality for the Music-Drama that is meant by 'immediate.'

Notice that a Drama (as acted) is both 'presentative' and 'immediate,' and yet displays at the same time a 'representative' element in its dialogue which is further 'immediate' in its presentativeness. Also that the same Drama, when read by one's self dumb-reading, is neither 'presentative' nor 'immediate.'

C the 'representative' character of Literature which employs symbols (words). Thus a painting may be contemplated as long as we wish, and we may meditate upon it at our ease. If the picture could change its aspect completely every moment it would be something like Music, which flows, and ebbs, and dies every moment that it is being listened to. Music is inexorable, and flows along without any regard to our desires to retard or recall its current. If pleasure is to be culled from any tone or chord, it must be done then and there, for a moment afterwards they will have vanished, and new tones have taken their place. The tones are momentary, hence they demand constant attention; they *monopolise* our attention if we would enjoy them, hence the attention should not be called away from them more than necessary. As applied to the style of Drama adapted to the Music-Drama, this means that it should be as clear—as simple—as is consistent with dramatic power. If a painting completely changed its aspect at every moment, we should not find much time to contemplate, let alone enjoy, any single aspect—in fact, after a short time we should probably be glad if the complex picture were changed for some simple coloured design which pretended to do no more than to amuse the eye like a kaleidoscope, without compelling us to discern the dramatic import of each picture. If action and language are complicated, and demand much mental application from the hearer, they will necessarily distract his attention from the Music, which will then cease to have any reason for its presence. We have called upon the Drama to make the Music clear, but if the Drama itself requires mental effort to unravel it at every moment, it cannot aid the Music much. Therefore the Drama required should not be complicated in its plot, or appeal to the intellect in its language—it should be simple, clear, and agree with the Music at every step. (Conservation of mental energies, pp. 39 and 126.)

D (D) Among the most noteworthy qualities of Music is its emotional character, which has already been discussed in the foregoing pages, and is nowadays so generally recognised that this quality of Music might be taken for granted. However, it will make the exposition more uniform to summarise some of the points.

(1) Music has long been associated with emotions by musical composers, and part of the development of Music has assumed the connection. In programme-music composers attempted to go even further. The long association of Music with words and Poetry in religious and secular song-music displays the same assumption, and some writers go so far even as to assume that Music had its origin in connection with the Dance and its accompanying emotions. That Music is capable of exciting the feelings is a matter of experience, and is almost publicly recognised in military music, religious and patriotic songs, funeral marches, etc. This leads to (2) Music is presently and remotely associated with one of the commonest

modes of expressing the feelings—speech in its widest sense, including cries, shouts, groans, etc. In fact, vocal Music among more or less uncivilised races seems to be a quasi-natural means of expressing various feelings. This belongs to Ethnology. As a physiological explanation of this phenomenon the following scant quotation may be interesting. “Sounds which go along with feeling, differ from the ordinary sounds, not only in loudness, but in pitch—departing from the medium tones more widely in proportion as the feeling increases. Here, too, it is to be observed that the relationship is displayed among animals. The sounds they make are always signs of feeling, pleasurable or painful, and similarly vary in intensity and pitch with the feeling.” Also—“The quality of voice which characterises an unexcited state, is that produced by vocal chords in a state of comparative relaxation; and the more sonorous character of the tones expressing much feeling, ending at length in that metallic ring which indicates great passion, implies increasing strain of the vocal chords.” For the further elucidation of this, see H. Spencer’s *Psychology*, vol. ii, “Language of the Emotions.” There is even a theory which proposes to explain the strange effect of Music upon us by the aid of this, in that present modes of appealing to our feelings through Music are parasitical upon the reverberations of the accumulated and inherited results of those (more or less inarticulate) cries, etc., which may be supposed at one time to have been the spontaneous expression accompanying the fierce emotions of primeval or of primitive man. This belongs rather to Anthropology. The third point belongs rather to Psychology or to *Æsthetics*. It is

(3) Music is theoretically fitted to suggest mental states corresponding to our feelings by reason of its psychic qualities, not only relatively to other Art means (pp. 5, 20, 28, 89 *et seq.*), but also on account of some striking points of likeness between Music and our feelings (as distinguished from the activity of our ‘knowing faculties’) (p. 39+).

(a) The primary likeness has already been mentioned (p. 20). It is founded upon the difference between the external world and the subject-world, which finds a correspondence in the difference between sensations derived from the outer world (as well as from Architecture, Painting, etc.), and the sensations derived from Music. “The External or . . . the Object-World is distinguished by the property called Extension, pertaining both to resisting matter and to unresisting, or empty Space.”—*Bain*. Feeling is subjective experience *par excellence*. So is Music as compared with the sensations from the works of other Arts (especially if the orchestra is invisible, and the attention so occupied otherwise as not to focus upon the musicians and instruments). We “detach our feelings from the experiences of the Object-World and refer them to the inner world of self.”

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To put these corresponding contrasts in diagrammatic form :—

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**External World.**


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 Sensations and ideas based thereupon.
 

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 Sensations in general, from objects and art-works appealing to the eye.
 

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 Comparative indifference towards the vast mass of sensations.
 

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 Comparative immunity of *spectator* of art-works from actual suffering.
 

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**Internal or subjective.**


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 Emotions.
 

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 Sensations of Music.
 

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 Emotions usually pleasurable or painful, at least not indifferent.
 

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 Tones in their combinations and sequence can give us keen pleasure or can make it very uncomfortable for us. They are seldom entirely indifferent.
 

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(b) Music has a *time*-element or factor of its effect; it does not end in a single 'moment' (cf. Painting). There is a persistence in the mental experience, and a cumulative emotional effect may be the result. This holds for Literature and Oratory also. So our feelings are not momentary. They have a time-element. Often they endure for a considerable period of time. There is an "emotional persistence" which strongly contrasts with the instantaneous nature of 'sensations.' " . . . A state of grief requires time for its full realisation. An emotion undergoes a certain rise or development from the stage of just appreciable excitement up to culmination."

(c) Music, by virtue of this quality, can 'work up' gradually to an effect—being made up of a succession of several 'art-moments,' which, if arranged in an adapted sequence, can effect (or reproduce) that general climax-form so characteristic of our feelings—beginning, development, climax, subsidence, end. (Compare preludes to *Lohengrin*, *Tristan*, *Tannhäuser*, and the 'form' of dramas in general, especially those in five acts.)

(d) Feelings are subjected to variations of intensity, force, massiveness, etc., from moment to moment. Music displays a like quality. It can vary in the directions of pitch, loudness, quality, massiveness, tempo, time, intensity, tonality, harmonic breadth—at one time spreading out in a broad river of harmony flowing almost sluggishly, again contracting itself to a silver stream of smooth, flowing melody—now rushing impetuously in its narrow bed until, rising in pitch and concentrating its trenchant tone quality in a single line, it becomes keenly incisive, and carries one away by its swift tempo and violent 'time.'

(e) Emotions are marked by the way they 'shade off' into one another, and by the way in which they are coloured by pleasurable and painful feelings and liability to appear, chameleon-like, now of one hue and now of another. D

"In many of our affective states . . . there is this meeting of the opposed elements of the agreeable and the disagreeable," etc. Likewise, Music easily 'shades off' from one phase of expression to another, and by almost imperceptible degrees; it also can pass easily from the sad to the joyful, from the painful to the pleasing; it, too, while keeping a general expression, can expose this to all the dynamic changes mentioned in the last paragraph, and, in addition, to a number of subtle changes of emotional expression that seem utterly inexplicable as the outcome of the simple and coarse 'material' changes. Harmony, and tonality, and scale go deep, and it is probable that the well is by no means exhausted. Music is a most wonderful Art as regards the infinite *variety* that is produced from very limited means. The palette is not large, but there is all the more opportunity for genius to display itself in manipulating the colours. Note that the peculiar expressiveness of Music does not lie in the above elements of pitch, loudness, quality, intensity, etc., but in the *changes* therein implied, viz.: *crescendo*, *diminuendo*, etc.

It is in *contrast* that the power of Music lies, not in absolute differences. Just as, among those pictorial arts which employ a single colour only, the particular colour becomes of little importance (so little, in fact, that the same scene may be depicted in silver grey, or sanguine, or brown, or black, according to the process), and the suggestions of nature are effected by gradations and contrasts within that one colour, or between it and the colour of the paper employed, without ever realising in any case the absolute difference between the sunlight and darkness of nature; so Music, with a meagre gamut, limited to the extremes of 'more pleasing' and 'less pleasing,' is yet capable of suggesting that vast gamut of feelings lying between absolute pleasure and absolute pain. It seems possible that a composer of sufficient inventiveness might suggest all the feelings possible to personages in an art-work like the Music-Drama without ever passing the safe bounds of the chord-and-discord palette of Beethoven.

With regard to the use and efficiency of the device of suggestiveness in Art in general, one need only turn to Poetry and the Graphic Arts. The strange and pleasing mental reverberations resulting from the impact of a word upon the mind is a matter of common experience and is one of the constant factors of poetry. Of course, the poet may not consciously recognise any of the complexities of subtle mental and phonetic associations of words. In modern paintings, suggestiveness is exploited to such a remarkable extent that the understanding is baffled in the attempt to explain how the fairy-like effect of a painting at forty feet is attained by the chaotic disposition of pigments disclosed by closer inspection.

To sum up then : The capacity for the suggestion of emotional states, and the pleasurable and painful accompaniments thereof is one of the most striking qualities of Music, and should not be disregarded in considering any Art based upon Music.

*Résumé of Qualities of Music :—*

A. *Artificiality*, both in respect of its psychic character as contrasted with the other Arts, and of the fact that it does not occur in the situation of an accompaniment of everyday life.

B. (1) The *sensuously pleasing* character of Music ; and

(2) Its pre-eminent capacity for *lofty* expression.

C. Its *immediate-presentative* nature (which necessitates, when combined with other Arts, a severe 'unity' to the end of economising the mental energy of the spectator, viz. auditor).

D. *Emotional*, that is, its singular capacity for suggesting to the mind of the auditor mental states corresponding in many respects to emotions.

Or in the following form :—

Since Music is a predicated feature of the Music-Drama, its qualities will largely determine the Style. These qualities are reducible to the following heads :—

(A) Different from outer aspects of everyday life and does not enter into everyday occupations and events.

(B) Must be *predominantly pleasing* (sensuously gratifying), to be called 'Music,' and it is capable of highest flights of beauty and poetical suggestiveness.

(C) It is an 'immediate-presentative Art, that is, it monopolises attention (sensation and enjoyment). It has also its peculiar 'measured' character incident upon its feature of severe rhythm and tempo.

(D) Music is emotional in the sense of 'capable of *suggesting* emotions.'

(E) Music is emotional in *particular directions*. It is not every emotion that demands *expression*, or that discharges itself in *musical* dialogue, and demands *lyric* expression.

From these qualities of Music much can be learned regarding the probable field of the Music-Drama, but in order that they can be conveniently applied they will be reduced to a *quasi* 'rule' form. It must be understood that the term "Canon" applied to them in the next chapter refers to the determination of the *theoretical form*, and not necessarily to the mode of producing, or composing music-dramas. The history of Art does not reflect very creditably upon the efficiency of rules to produce art-works or to insure Style. Such Canons merely constitute a convenient method of dealing with the large and intricate field of the Music-Drama in a treatise. The reader should beware of mistaking the authoritative look of the following canons for any assertion of superhuman origin.



## II.

## CHAPTER III.

## DERIVATION OF THE CANONS.

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(\* The *names* are of little importance except as recognition marks.)

[*A.* As opposed to Naturalism in the sense of the imitation of contemporary life in its 'inner' and 'outer' aspects.

On the part of the artist it means originality of conception, free use of the phantasy, and more under the dominion of the æsthetic feelings than other Arts.

*B.* As opposed to Realism in its worst sense, and Sensationalism. Nobility of conception, æsthetical, pictorially beautiful, lofty; different from the aspects of everyday life in the sense of *more poetical*; neither filthy, nor painful, nor trite, nor 'sensational.'

*C1.* Simplicity, as opposed to complexity and extensiveness.

*C2.* Unity, as opposed to the irrelevancy of episode; on the part of the artist it means exclusion of episode, of distracting features; severity of dramatic development.

*C3.* Consistency; agreement between Music and the Drama, including the outer stage and the inner emotions (also opposed to Sensationalism).

*C3a.* 'Lyric' or vocal, as opposed to any other kind of expression. Fitness between vocal part, action, and emotions.

*C*4. Sincerity; agreement between the vocal music, acting, and the emotions of the characters.

*C*5. Symbolism; agreement between the stage belongings and the Drama. (Costume, scenery, attributes of the characters, etc.)

*D*. Emotion, as opposed to *intellectual* (and to 'outer').

*E*. Expression, as opposed to restraint, reserve, control of the feelings, and all that is associated with the 'ratiocinating character,' as distinguished from the man or woman of (dramatic) feeling and expression thereof.

Canon *A* is derived from Quality *A*.

" *B* " " *B*.

" *C*

" *C*1

" *C*2

" *C*3

" *C*3a

" *C*4

" *C*5

" *D*

" *E*

} are " " *C*.

} (Emotional Nature) are derived from Quality *D*.

*C*1, *C*2, *C*3, *C*4, *C*5 are each and all aspects of 'fitness.' Thus—

*C*1. Adaptation to the sensuous and monopolising nature of Music.

*C*2. Fitness of one part of the Drama to another part, and to the whole for dramatic effect and economy of energy.

*C*3. Fitness existing between the Music and the dramatic action. Music has peculiar qualities, such as exact Rhythm.

*C*3a. The same for the vocal part.

*C*4. Fitness of the vocal Style to express the particular emotional states of the characters, and to avoid distracting the hearer's attention. Sincerity of expression of sincere feelings is a part of *unity*.

*C*5. Fitness of all external features (costume, attributes, etc.) to the Drama as a whole, both for dramatic effect and economy of attention.

By showing what is most obviously *unfit* for the Music-Drama, we are able to see vividly what is most *fit* for inclusion in the Music-Drama. We can discern a virtue most clearly by marking the vice of which it is the complete opposite. (Cf. test by elimination, p. 56.)

The foundation of a 'Style.'

The case before us is this. We have a number of factors to blend harmoniously, and to make this blend such a one as shall be artistically most effective. We have our 'feeling' and 'reason' to guide us. The possible mixtures are *many*. The *best* blend is *single*, and can be found only by trial and rejection. Moreover, several effective blends are sometimes possible, even with a limited number of factors, and two other Styles

might be here treated—that of the Comic Opera and of the *Oratorio*. We have chosen the full apparatus of the Stage and the serious side of Drama for consideration in this book.

“The conception of *Style* may be best defined as the complete agreement between ‘contents’ and form: a consistency extending to the smallest details, viz. between *that to be rendered* (be this an artistic conception or a work of art requiring reproduction) and the *performance* thereof (be this the work of the creating (designing) artist, as in Sculpture and Painting, or the work of a performing company, as in Architecture, Symphonic Music, and the Drama).”—*Hans von Wolzogen*.]

These are the *criteria* of criticism of the Music-Drama. Let us now see how they are derived.

(A) *Idealism*.—The Music-Drama differs primarily from the Spoken Drama by the presence of Music as an essential feature. A

Now, this factor of the Music-Drama—Music—does not enter as an integral feature of our acts in everyday life. None of our acts are necessarily accompanied by an orchestral accompaniment, nor do we express our thoughts and feelings in song and ‘recitative.’ Hence, when we present an action on the stage accompanied by an orchestral part, and compel the actors to express their thoughts and emotions in song and recitative, we have made an artificial product (art-work) which differs entirely from everyday life, and further differs from any accurate *imitation* of everyday life, such as we are accustomed to upon the Stage. The artificiality of the whole procedure is self-apparent.

The outcome of this observation is that, unless the aspects of the action on the Stage *differ* from the aspects of everyday life, a situation will be presented so utterly *unnatural*, that it must excite the disgust or ridicule of the spectator, if he has not completely renounced all sense of what is natural. Just as a man would make himself ridiculous in ordinary life if he persisted in singing his thoughts and feelings to his fellow creatures, so the *representation* on the Stage of such a situation should excite disgust or ridicule. In order to produce an art-work which will not be ridiculous, we must not seek to combine a representation of the aspects of contemporary life with a musical accompaniment. Angel-wings attached to a dress suit are not more palpably false than Music applied to dress suits on the Stage. (Cf. modern street scenes, scene in hospital, in a restaurant.) In reference, then to the Music-Drama, whatever appears upon the Stage must not suggest contemporary life in its outer aspects. We may term this the canon of *Idealism*.

It is hardly conceivable how much *depends upon* this single point—how many things ‘conformity with it’ decides without further parley—how many features of the ‘Opera’ even are sanctioned, features which in the operas themselves were the most *reprehensible* of all. It is astonishing

*A* what a free realm is opened up to the composer-poet by the conformity to this one feature. Upon it turn the 'chorus question,' the 'general dramatic effect question' (differentiation of Style from that of independent Drama), the 'scenery question,' and the question of sublimity *versus* genre-treatment (cf. p. 19).

It applies fully to the serious 'Opera' as well. Modern orchestral Music is 'artificial,' in that it is a human device with no adequate prototype in nature of which it could be an imitation. Hence its association with an art Drama based on the outer aspects of life is a daring procedure.

In principles *A* and *B* it has been attempted to give the term 'idealistic' a *definite* meaning. Whether successfully or not, a reader who has done much reading in works dealing with Art must recognise the prime importance of getting a clear, definite and vivid conception of what ideas are best conveyed by idealistic, ideal, real, realistic, natural and naturalistic. For the purposes of this work, "idealistic" is resolved into three notions:—(1) artificial (human) product: opposed to natural; (2) unfamiliar; not presenting or suggesting the outer aspects of modern life; (3) differing from everyday life in being more *beautiful*; æsthetical as opposed to realistic in its worst sense.

Those who are familiar with art-works of *all* fields of Art will recognise in Canons *A* and *B* applications much broader than the Music-Drama. In its most general form both *A* and *B* are principles of *fitness*. In a more special way *A* may be stated thus: what an Art should attempt is limited by its materials, tools, mode of execution, and psychic qualities; as regards fidelity to the outer aspects of Nature, an Art which is adapted by its means to *attain* a goodly degree of fidelity to Nature may cultivate the direction of close imitation; on the other hand, Arts that by reason of materials, tools, mode of execution, etc., are *perforce prevented* from attaining to any close fidelity of representation, would do well to cultivate other fields, in fact, to *abstain from suggesting* that they in any way *propose* to offer an imitation of Nature. In *B* we have simply an instance of the particular definition of the field proper to certain Arts, to wit: if a particular Art by reason of its materials, tools, mode of execution, and psychic qualities (including general 'situation' in the case of Music-Drama and of some other Arts) is practically fitted to attain lofty and noble effects, that Art would do well to cultivate directions leading to such general effects, rather than the field of the filthy, or of the common-place (genre), or of the purely 'thrilling.' This is brought out more fully and concretely in succeeding portions of this work.

*B* (*B*) *Beauty*.—Having been compelled to break away from any form of Drama which strives to represent the aspects of contemporary life, we are in a most advantageous position as regards a work of art, for we are freed from all those trammels which necessitate an inexorable imitation of a model, whether that model be suitable or not. The galling conditions of accurately following a model are displayed in the case of 'historical' Drama; either history is lacerated, or the Drama is strait-jacketed to make it conform to history, and the artist is either called to order for ignorance or contempt of history, or he is pursued by the keen lash of the Art 'critics.' The artist of the 'Music-Drama' is left free to follow his artistic instincts, to present what is most lofty and picturesque in Man and Nature. He is complete master of all that is grand and beautiful in Nature and Art, and can serenely ignore all that is repulsive therein.

In seeking to embody the highest and grandest and most beautiful

aspects of man in his works, the artist will not only be satisfying his artistic impulses, but also those of his appreciators. Moreover, the presence of the element *Music* demands that the other factors should display this lofty character, for Music is *perforce* beautiful (p. 26), and seems pre-eminently adapted to suggest that which is lofty, as is seen by its persistent association with Religion. Painting and Literature are able to deal with that which is less beautiful, and even with what is repulsive. Hence the Music-Drama should distinguish itself from actual life, from the 'novel,' and from the naturalistic drama by its lofty and beautiful nature. This may be termed the canon of *Beauty* (B).

The 'antique' style of the language of the Bible contributes not a little to remove its contents from adverse criticism, and from becoming ludicrous. This shows how a style of treatment can furnish an idealistic atmosphere for the protection of its subject-matter. The peculiar vocal style in which the 'lessons' for the day are sometimes read in the Church service, also tends to the same end.

Poets naturally betake themselves to archaic expressions when treating some subject-matters. Cf. W. Morris and Coleridge.

As regards the degree of fidelity of imitation which an Art ought to aim at attaining, I would suggest the following general principle:—It is wholly a matter of *fitness*; if an Art, by reason of its materials, tools, mode of execution, practical function, or psychic nature, is prevented from attaining a high degree of fidelity in imitation, that Art would do well to renounce the attempt and cultivate some field of activity more compatible with its nature and means of execution.

The reader should test this principle for all the Art-processes he can think of, mosaic, stained glass, ceramics, etc. As applied to the Music-Drama, it would mean that, since the situation of orchestral accompaniment and musical dialogue preclude once for all any fidelity to actual life, the Art should cultivate a field peculiar to itself, and, to avoid misconceptions and suggestions, should make it clearly felt that it does not even propose to imitate the outer aspects of contemporary life (A and B).

Notice that if the Art of the Music-Drama had undergone a natural organic development it would not have adopted orchestral accompaniment and musical dialogue until the subject-matter had demanded it—had cried aloud for it—and that point would have been where Drama had striven to be more beautiful than the means of ordinary speech allowed, or the most lofty poetic diction even. Then would it, of itself, have demanded a higher, a loftier, a more transcendental language—and found *Music*. But in the actual case this higher language—Music—was tacked on to a drama which did not demand any other diction than speech (cf. *Camille* and *Traviata*), indeed originally employed it, and the result, the *Opera*, showed the stitches.

A  
&  
B     Man must first get far enough away from actual life before he can be free to exalt it. His art-work must not suggest everyday life or it will fail, for we are keenly sensitive to inaccuracies in the presentation of life as we know it from our continual experience. To present an exalted picture of *everyday* life is to challenge our sense of reality and possibility.

In order to exalt human life for Art purposes, man must get far away from the *appearances* of actual life; for if his representation suggests contemporary life in its outer aspects it is apt to appear ludicrous. We are keenly alive to what is *possible* in actual life, and will not endure too much 'sweetening' in any representation which poses as a reproduction of actual life.

The position of the Music-Drama among the Arts makes it very difficult to determine its 'Style.' The factor Music requires 'Idealism,' and the Dramatic element demands a certain amount of 'Naturalism.' To determine the meeting point for every feature of the whole work is a difficult matter (cf. last § p. 34).

C1     (C1) *Simplicity.*—This canon is very important, for the Music-Drama is not like a compound of Architecture, Sculpture, and Painting; the works of these Arts are lasting in their nature, they endure for contemplation, they are not momentary like Music which is being performed. They do not demand instant enjoyment, but may be observed at length, and each part remains for separate contemplation. They are not "immediately presentative"—the property of Music that, at every moment of its flow, it must be enjoyed *then and there*, for, unlike a picture or statue, it perishes at every moment of its course. If the mind of the hearer is too much distracted from the Music, it will lose the chief pleasure of the whole work—the pleasure arising from the Music. Hence the Music-Drama should display those qualities of Unity and Simplicity which render the work easy of comprehension.

A compound Art, especially such a one as the Music-Drama, is exposed to special dangers in that it proposes to assail the sense-organs of the spectator to such an extent that his mind may easily be distracted and wearied from excessive activity. The great danger of an Art so extensively cumulative in its factors as the Music-Drama is that it may offer more *stimuli* to the mind than the mind can be conscious of, much less enjoy. The hearer will either be obliged to cease to look at the Stage, or the spectator will have to cease to listen to the Music. Could the enjoyment of the Music be postponed, all might be well, for then the attention might be successively devoted to the Music and the Stage. It might be thought that the *Music* could be rendered very simple with advantage, but this would entail a renunciation of many of the forcible modes of emotional expression of Music. Moreover, it would be renouncing the very element for which the Music-Drama exists. If the important element of symphonic Music be removed, this Art ceases to have a reason for its separate existence as distinguished from Drama in general. Full

orchestral music is the *sine qua non* of the peculiar Style of the Music-Drama.

If the musical expression is to be rendered clear by the dramatic context, this must be very simple and easily understood, otherwise the explanation will become an impediment, and fail to perform its function. The mind of the spectator is assailed by so many impressions, from the orchestral music, the vocal music, the colours and forms presented to the eye, etc., that it will be unable to assimilate the many impressions of sense if they are not carefully gauged by the artist's taste.

If the mind be called upon in addition to disentangle a complicated plot, it will not be enjoying a work of art, but doing work itself. Here we meet one of the crucial points of departure from the Style of Independent Drama.

There is a law of the mental energies similar to the law of physical energies—of the Conservation of Energy; it is the law of the conservation of the sum of the mental energies or activities. While listening in astonishment to the fluent expressions of the orator we cannot always, unless thoroughly absorbed in the discourse, repress the consciousness that the orator is not feeling so strongly and deeply perhaps as his announcements indicate. An electric dynamo is said to evolve less heat when it is compelled to 'do work' viz. run a motor, etc. So there is a certain compensation (or interdependence) in the activity of the various mental faculties, such that the sum of the activities (energies) of the various faculties is the same (for the same initial quantity of energy), whatever may be the quantitative or qualitative distribution of the energy.

*C* might be termed the Canon of Consistency. In its application the canon presents several aspects which are designated *C* 1, *C* 2, *C* 3, etc.

That these qualities will actually conduce to obviate the difficulty of distraction, and that they will add to the force of the work, may be recognised on consideration.

The Music-Drama is more peculiarly an *art-work* than independent Drama is, in the respect that it is more sensuous, i.e. farther removed from the mental exercise of intellection and reasoning. It is in this regard that the art-work differentiates itself most widely from the scientific work (treatise). But practically, the Music-Drama will only be this under the conditions dictated by these canons, for the distinctive effect of the art-work is not only to be attained by belabouring the intellect to the minimum extent, but also by exercising the senses to the smallest extent compatible with a pleasing consciousness of the kind peculiar to the art-work, i.e. æsthetic gratification. The 'play-impulse' expending itself in a refined manner, and in the peculiar directions dictated by the peculiar *stimuli* of the art-work is the 'norm' of Art as distinguished from Science, Religion, Utility, Luxury, and Low Sensuality. (Cf. also Part 8, p. 126.)

"Two things are necessary for the poet and artist; he must rise above Reality and he must remain within the Sensuous. Where both

*C* 1

these exigencies are fulfilled equally, there is æsthetic Art."—*Schiller*. This deep observation of Schiller applies very particularly to the Music-Drama, which, by its 'general situation' of lyric dialogue and orchestral accompaniment, is compelled to "rise above reality," and yet, by its dramatic basis, is constrained to be emotional in its nature; and further, by the continual presence of the sensuously monopolising element Music, as well as the multiplicity of the *stimuli* offered to the spectator, is forced to remain predominantly simple and sensuous.

(C2) *Unity*.—Severe Dramatic Unity is a means of economising the energy of the auditor.

If every arbitrary introduction of irrelevant features be avoided, the mind will not be nonplussed to find the connection between the various parts which make up the action. By confining the action to a severe dramatic development a cause for every event is assigned. The sequence is exposed clearly to the spectator; he is not compelled to think it out for himself. Everything must conduce to make the action clear without exacting serious mental application from the spectator. As far as possible the sequence of events should be natural, viz. the order which the mind would naturally expect from its experience of life. (As examples, contrast the rambling episodes from which Wagner took his dramatic ideas with the severely dramatic form they finally assumed in his works.) A severe dramatic development serves to make it easy for the contemplator to understand why events happened as they did.

This is one reason for entirely excluding the Comic in the serious type of Music-Drama. There are several reasons, but the one most binding for us is that of C2 and C3. Music absorbs attention. The Ludicrous is a discharge of energy that monopolises the attention for the moment and distracts attention from the Music. The 'scherzo' in Music by no means corresponds to the *joke* in speech. Cf. also the renunciation of intense (breathless!) dramatic effects in the Music-Drama, pp. 62-63.

Each one of Wagner's works is characterised by some predominating quality—they do not form a mere series of 'operas' differing only in the 'action.' *Tannhäuser* approaches, in its emotional action and outward show, nearer to our own *sensibilities* and life than the other works. We are likely to be more *intensely moved* by the dramatic action of *Tannhäuser*, than that of the highly ideal *Lohengrin*, or of the far removed *Nibelungen-Ring*. *Tristan and Isolde* is that work in which the action is most 'lyrical' in its 'inner' nature and poetical treatment. *Rienzi* and the *Nibelungen-Ring* display a certain epic—*an objective*—trait, like a series of adventures of some wandering knight; a succession of happenings in the outer world in which the knight is embroiled, but which are as an objective Nemesis over which his will can exert little influence. In *Tristan*, the dramatic events are worked into a web which is *psychic*, in which the *events* are *inner* events, having their origin in the minds (hearts) of the acting personages; and the succession or development of events seems to be more the outcome of the working of the individual 'wills,' than an objectively determined succession (Fate). This is more modern, more human, as a form of treatment. It reminds one of *Shakespeare's* Dramas rather than Dante's narrative or Chaucer's tales, of Ibsen's conversation-plays rather than a melodrama made up of *catastrophes*. The treatment of the dramatic action is *human*, in that it displays man as *determining his own fate*, rather than as an animal or stone in



the haods of Nature. The standpoint is *anthropocentric*, the universe is again made to revolve about man as its centre: man is no longer treated like a puppet worked by unseen wires from without, but in his grandest aspect, as an individual exercising his will-power over all things about him; as an independent being, working out his own fate. It is in this grand attitude that we like to look upon man, and the Drama of individualism shows that artists have recognised that form of treating dramatic actions which shall give them the highest interest in the eyes of an audience made up of human beings, each conscious of his will-power, and of the real drama of his own life.

One might express this human aspect of the world—this artistic conception—as a form of philosophy; an idealistic conception of the universe starting from the philosopher himself, from his ‘will,’ and seeking to explain all by that method—a sort of idealistic philosophy like that of Schopenhauer. (*Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung.*)

It is in this exaltation of the human will, and its display upon the stage, that the Drama rises to its form most differentiated from the epical ‘story,’ ‘tale,’ or ‘romance,’ in which we feel that the hero even is ‘being handled’ by the poet, and not handling himself as an independent individual with a strong will. In one case, the Poet is felt to be working the wires to which his characters are attached; in the Drama of *Individualism*, the dramatist disappears in the personality of his characters, working out their own ‘fates’ for weal or woe.

To emphasise the difference between Drama and Epical Poetry, a likeness might be drawn from another department of Art,—Painting or Sculpture. A series of paintings, or bas-reliefs, does not make a drama by a very long way, but makes an Epic, as far as it is possible for a different Art to do this. A disconnected series of pictures, each presenting a particular ‘dramatic moment,’ lacks that causal connection which lies at the very foundation of *subjective* Drama or Drama at its highest, most highly differentiated as an Art from other Arts. There are dramatic moments which can be seized by the brush or chisel; but there is another part to a drama, and that is the dramatic development—the causal succession of the whole, including those dramatic moments in which the will is forced to display itself in an act of volition of import to the various personages. Nor would a complete series of instantaneous photographs convey, with any intensity (vividness) the development of a Drama; the photographs might give a complete statement concerning the movements of the actors and their various changes of expression—of the *mimic*—but the language of the emotions, ‘gesture and expression,’ is too *vague* a language to tell distinctly and definitely the development of the drama, especially of that part which is unseen,—the psychical development. Gesture and expression make an excellent auxiliary language to enforce the spoken language, but, as an independent mode of expression, ‘mimic’ is as indefinite as Music to express the details of the development. Both Music and gesture are powerful adjuncts to language, but they are not definite enough in themselves to make a dramatic action clear. In the definite expression of complex details, speech has been developed far beyond either gesture or Music.

*Wagner* largely eliminates the melodramatic element of *chance* from his dramas; all is *motivirt*—no *accidents*; not only objective chance occurrences are eliminated, but also

Every occurrence is the result of a cause which appears in the dramatic development, and that cause itself is usually shown to be generated by the natural excitation of emotions in the minds of the actors. In other words, the whole action springs from *within*—it is not impressed on the course of events from without. The whole drama takes its beginning from *mental* activities. Even the curse which is laid on the 'Ring' does not cause any catastrophe which would not have come *without* the pronounced curse. It is the personal *greed for gold* which brings the holder of the ring into trouble, for he is then *envied* by others.

The 'inner' drama is complete within itself; it does not require any *deus ex machina* to regulate its movement from time to time—to appear in a cloud and save his favourites from the hand of the enemy. Justice is attained without the accidental (!) arrival of the sheriff's *posse* just in time. It satisfies *C2*.

*C2*

For a like reason, a severity of dramatic development is necessary. *Tristan* (the first act) is a remarkable instance of this severity of dramatic development. The adroit manner in which the conversation is turned that it may display the motivation of the drama in a most clear and pregnant form, almost suggests the suspicion that this adroit arrangement was the result of cold reflection, not feeling. The object of terseness of dialogue and severity in the succession of the dramatic motives, are phases of that 'Style' of treatment which is required for a musical Drama as differentiated from other forms of Drama. The Drama must explain itself to the spectator with the maximum of clearness and the minimum of exertion of the intellect of the spectator, in order that the Music may exercise its full effect on the senses of the auditor. The 'Conversation-Drama' is a most unlyrical form in another respect, viz. in that there is a minimum of *action*, of *acting*. A lively action is fitted for the musical Drama for two reasons,—first, because such a lively action conveys the Drama to the spectator's mind *directly through the eye*, which leaves the attention clear for the appreciation of the Music, both vocal and orchestral; secondly, because *actions* are the outcome of *emotions*, and the Music-Drama is pre-eminently an *emotional* form of drama. It will be seen that the modern 'conversation' Drama is highly *unlyrical*; it explains itself almost solely through speech appealing to the intellect, and not acting through the *eye*, and since the speakers are so verbose, it may well be seen that strong emotions and spontaneous expression have not much place therein.

*Severe* development then, but not extensive or complicated. A closely woven web, but a small number of threads. A *simple* dramatic action may be severe in its dramatic development (p. 51).

*C3*  
*C3a*

(*C3*) *Consistency* and (*C3a*) *Lyric* are both aspects of *C2*—of that *Unity* which is necessary lest the quality C of Music be disastrously disregarded. Both are a protest against the distraction of the spectator's (viz. hearer's) attention, and have their special application to the point of perfect agreement between the orchestral Music and the emotions arising out of a dramatic 'situation' (see footnote, p. 54), and also between the emotions of the characters and the vocal dialogue in which they express these emotions.

That this consistency will really mitigate the disseverance of attention can be readily grasped by the reader, and if he be familiar with Opera he will recognise in these two canons a protest against a feature that, in its most tantalising stage, amounted simply to heartless insincerity against which the next canon protests. The music should agree in its expression with the emotions it expresses, and the vocal music should do the same; and, conversely, the emotions should be such as call for expression in instrumental and vocal music, and none others. Further, the agreement should be definite to the point of agreeing with that 'measured' character of Music which appears as *tempo*, severe rhythm, perfect harmony, etc.

(C4) *Sincerity*.—We are keenly sensitive to insincerity of expression on the part of any character posing as sincere. Thus the sincerity of deep grief may be completely belied by an unfitting vocal style which compels the character to display vocal 'execution' instead of the grief which he is represented as feeling. Another discrepancy between vocal style and emotion is that where the emotion is expressed by some purely 'conventional' musical phrase, such as the *recitative secco*. Conventional Music savours of the conventional forms of speech employed in polite address in order to hide a lack of any real feeling. (Cf. p. 111.) C4

One of the chief reformatory features of the Music-Drama consists in getting rid of a vocal style founded upon conventional phrases and upon the display of ability in vocal execution.

(C5) *Symbolism*.—Symbolising enables the dramatist to exclude distracting episode in small details even. The Stage performs its function of rendering the musical expression as clear and vivid as possible, when *every detail* expresses something connected with the dramatic action. As 'attributes' of a character (the spear or sword, etc.), objects may become symbols of the character bearing the objects; a 'cumulative' effect is attained by expressing a fact in as many ways as possible, providing they are relevant and do not clash. By a complete conspiracy of the factors a cumulative effect is attained, which would be impossible otherwise. Symbolism is really a feature of that 'economy of energy' before referred to, and is closely allied to dramatic Unity (C2). In becoming a symbol of some psychic feature of a Drama an object is prevented from becoming a 'distracting' feature, a mere episode, of the scene. The climax of dramatic expressiveness would be reached if *every* object presented by the stage to the eye of the spectator were a symbol of something entering into the dramatic development (motif). If the scenery as well were made symbolic of the general emotional pitch of the scene (somewhat as the general colour-tone of a picture might agree with the poetic sentiment of that represented), and we were sensitively attuned to such effects, the Stage might *speak*, all objects become enlivened by the dramatic and poetical life breathed into them. The naïve association of *wings*, and *robes*, and *harps* in the conception of heaven has a world of meaning for the Music-Drama, C5

for it bespeaks that cumulation of details to an expressive end, which is symbolism even to the fineness of Music.

Under symbolism is included all of those poetic devices for rendering Poetry vivid and easy of comprehension (cf. H. Spencer, *Essay on Philosophy of Style*) putting the concrete and particular for the abstract and general, etc. Cf. in *Tannhäuser* the *visible* branch or staff with leaves as a *concrete* (vivid because miraculous) sign of forgiveness, far more effective than a mere verbal form of forgiveness, especially in connection with the Pope's prediction.—*Tannhäuser*, iii., last scene.

C5

It is of the utmost importance that everything should be clear on the stage, for if the 'inner Drama,' is to be revealed to the spectators, every consistent mode of revelation or expression should be utilised. All that is possible should be done to enable the Stage to perform its function most perfectly, that is, of making the pathos of the Music recognisable. Now character is the important factor in the 'inner conflicts,' and a great service may be rendered if it can be brought to the surface and presented directly to the spectators. Of course, this is commonly effected by the outward 'make up' or 'mask' of each actor, but it should be still more carefully attended to in the Music-Drama. Symbolism is an important aid in revealing the inner nature of a character to the spectators, one feature of its efficacy being that it is not only an 'outward and visible sign' of the inner character of the bearer, but that the character is made thereby more concrete, less abstract, consequently more comprehensible. It is a common device of the poets to put concrete images for abstract ideas since the mind grasps the former more easily than the latter. Symbols are more or less conventional, ranging from a fish to a cross or a lamb as a symbol of Christ. The 'thunderbolts of Jove' have become proverbial, and most of the heathen gods have their peculiar 'attributes.' In the *Ring of the Nibelungen* Wagner has made the 'ring,' the 'spear,' and the 'sword' symbols of the whole dramatic action; these 'attributes' almost constitute a drama in themselves. (Cf. p. 103.)

As regards Costume as an exponent of character a whole chapter might be writted. The modern costume of men tends towards uniformity both in form and colour. As far as cut and colour are concerned, the dress of the President of the United States does not differ from that of his fellow-citizens, and even the workman may be seen working in a stiff felt hat more suited to the promenade. Boys assume the 'toga of their fathers' long before there is any 'pretext' therefor.

Decided colours scarcely dare to show themselves, and even in ecclesiastical and military dress, the tendency is towards the sombre unobtrusive blacks and greys. The citizen, the soldier, the priest, and the ruler, are no longer distinguished as in the days of the toga and the suit of armour. All this has its good side, perhaps, as regards actual life, but it shows more clearly that the form of Drama which shall be the most

beautiful we can devise would hardly present an imitation of contemporary life. We may hope that the prestige of Shakespeare's plays may serve to keep alive an appreciation of a most picturesque feature of days gone by—costume. The tenacity with which modern sculptors hold to the Classical Form of garment in which to drape their potentates, may seem at times rather amusing, but it is natural, for the modern 'business suit' cannot be said to be Sculpturesque. In renouncing decided colours in dress, we have done away with the thorough appreciation of an expressive feature of costume for Stage purposes—the symbolism of *colour*. It seems surprising that anything so subtle and complex as character, can be in any way associated with mere colour sensations, and yet there are certain colours which are so fitted to certain characters and occasions, that they can aid in determining our sentiments. The association of black with death has received the sanction of the civilised world. White and purity, purple and royalty, rose colour and youth, brown and grey and humility, a motley of colours and frivolity, are instances of more or less conventional symbolism of colour. More will be said of colour in the part relating to scenery (cf. 10, Costume, p. 136).

(D) *Emotion*.—That the remarkable *emotional* quality of Music discussed in the last chapter under D, should be disregarded in considering the form of the Music-Drama would be an inexcusable neglect to utilise a very potent quality of Music, and a disregard of the general principle of Art 'that an Art ought to cultivate those qualities which are natural to it by virtue of its materials, mode of execution, psychic qualities, etc.' The inference is that all parts of the Music-Drama ought to display an emotional character—ought to be the expression of *feeling*—to any extent consistent with the integrity of *Style*. This was really taken into consideration when dramatic Poetry was predicated as the form suitable to constitute a *Style* (see Chap. I.). But a further application is possible in defining what Dramatic Poetry is.

(E) *Expression* asserts that every part of the Music-Drama ought to agree with quality D of Music (p. 32) not only in being emotional, but also in being *expressive* of the emotions. If the action is to be founded upon emotion, the characters entering into the Drama will be such as express their emotions spontaneously, instead of attempting to inhibit the expression of them, and will thus help to explain the action and Music to the spectators (C2). In this service the canon might be derived from quality C of Music, for one of the greatest aids to the explanation of the emotional content of the Music is the Stage with all its phenomena of expression, visible and otherwise, and this means the maximum of *expression* of emotions consistent with integrity of *Style*.

E like A depends partly upon the general situation (p. 35), proposed by the Music-Drama, of Drama with musical undercurrent and dialogue. For, just as canon A was derived from the consideration of the unavoidable

*artificiality* of this 'general situation,' so canon *E* is derived from the *perforce* emotional nature of musical dialogue, and hence the necessity for such a situation as shall justify such an unusual and abnormal form of expression as musical dialogue. Unless there be an emotion concerned of such a strong or lofty nature as to demand such an elated form of expression as this, there is no call for it whatever. Such a musical diction would be as uncalled for as in that case in Poetry, in which a strong emotional diction is employed to express very ordinary and unemotional subject-matter—commonly called bombast. Here we discern its affiliation with *A* and *B*, for the latter demands a situation which calls for a diction and atmosphere so far above that of ordinary life as vocal and instrumental Music are, and this could naturally only be a diction differing from that of ordinary life (*A*).

This may serve to summarise the matter of the canons, and serves to show what an intimate correlation exists among them. They agree among themselves, as well as having agreement or harmony or Style for their object, and one depends upon the other, and all are referable to the peculiar properties of Music that require a situation more emotional than ordinary real ones are (*D*); more emotional in a direction consistent with musical dialogue (*E*); different from everyday life (*A*), and different from it in respect of 'more beautiful' (*B*); more simple (*C1*); more severe in dramatic sequence (*C2*); perfectly harmonious in all parts and details (*C3*), (*C3a*), (*C4*), (*C5*), all springing from the æsthetical, artificial, 'immediate-presentative,' and emotional qualities of Music in connection with the 'general situation' of Stage, Orchestral Music, and sung dialogue, proposed by the Music-Drama as an Art-species (Chap. I.).

The foregoing also serves to bring vividly to one's mind what is meant when the Music-Drama is termed an 'ideal' or 'idealistic' Art. All the above canons are simply expressions of the various sides of this quality. They assert the necessity for a certain kind of 'removal from the aspects of everyday life' as the *conditio sine qua non* of perfect harmony under the conditions proposed by the Music-Drama, and this is the predominating character of the Music-Drama as disclosed by a preliminary examination in Chaps. I. and II., and as will appear with greater and greater cogency throughout the remaining pages. Let no one be frightened by the words 'ideal' and 'idealistic,' they are simply terms for what is done in all art-works when beautiful objects are chosen for depiction rather than ugly or filthy ones, and in daily life when a corresponding choice is made in subjects for conversation or for day-dreams, or in kindly and gentle ways of acting towards one another, in dress, buildings, mode of life, and proper sanitary arrangements. It is only part and parcel of that general selective tendency displayed in the most commonplace activities of life, as well as in art-works.

### III.

#### APPLICATION OF THE CANONS.

##### 1. DRAMATIC IDEA.

(SUBJECT, IDEA, AND THE CONDITION FOR ITS STYLISTIC DEVELOPMENT.)

SOME general dramatic idea is usually to be deduced from a drama, and it naturally suggests itself to us that the particular drama was the mental outcome and development of this general dramatic idea. Whether such is the mode of composing a modern drama, or is the best mode for composing the dramatic web of the Music-Drama, does not need discussion here. The point is that *if* the composition does start from a germ, as from a general dramatic idea such as the 'triumph of pure self-sacrificing love over desire for riches and power,' then that germ should display certain qualities and should be mentally developed in a peculiar way. It will make some of the succeeding points clearer if we assume some such theoretical mode of composition. Many nascent features had to be touched upon in part (1) that are subsequently treated more fully in the following parts.

From this probably arises the fact that many operas and literary works even that seem so promising, when read merely as plots or as short stories, are disappointing when seen or read in the original form from which the *résumé* is condensed. It is the *form* into which the basial idea is cast that is displeasing. The *Cid*, for instance, is a remarkably beautiful and dramatic theme, but may be disappointing to the reader of Corneille's drama from the *artificial form* into which it is cast. We can fancy *Pope* treating the idea of Siegfried in a very different way from Wagner. (Cf. the effect of the wig upon out-of-door characters in his translation of *Homer*.) It is for this reason possibly that so many operas do not come up to the expectations of them engendered by reading the underlying idea only. The difference between good and bad dramas lies largely just in the difference between the forms into which the idea is cast, not in the idea itself. One could hardly judge of the merits of an opera from its condensed action as displayed in a "guide to the opera." For aught to the contrary, the basial idea of *Tannhäuser* might be presented in modern form just as well as in medieval setting, but in the importance for the Music-Drama of avoiding

the modern dress-suit lies all the fitness of the idea for the artistic form of representation of the Music-Drama. With regard to this possibility of multiplicity of form, notice how fertile that fundamental idea of 'redemption' was in the hands of Wagner. The idea of redemption by an expiatory sacrifice underlies the dramas of *Tannhäuser*, *Flying Dutchman*, *Tristan*, *Ring of the Niblungs*, and *Parsifal*, which in other respects are as far apart as the overtures or preludes to them are musically different.

In the composition of the Music-Drama, theoretically, all parts should spring into existence in connection with one another, and, if possible, the work should be of one casting. Practically, the construction of a Music-Drama will hardly enjoy such a Palladic completeness of genesis. (It is interesting in this connection to peruse a somewhat detailed account of R. Wagner's productivity, and to fancy the immense amount of practice which he enjoyed in his long career as artist.) The conception will probably be of gradual growth, and will be affected by various considerations during its mental conception, such influence being quite as essential as those special considerations which apply to the separate parts in their ultimate form. However, the considerations will be *alike* in both cases. This preliminary part will be of a very general nature.

It is very interesting to study the *changes* which some of Wagner's works underwent before they reached their final shape, for this process of each part being *affected* by the other parts is therein displayed vividly. (Of. G. Noufflard upon the matter of trial and rejection in the case of Wagner with reference to the subjects of *Frederick Barbarossa*, *Jesus of Nazareth*, and *Wieland*. All goes to show that the works by which Wagner is known are the outcome of a process of "survival of the fittest" in Wagner's mind, and in the case of *Wieland* it seems easy to see why it did not survive in competing with *Siegfried*.)

A  
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B

The subject-matter in general must not strongly suggest any distinctive traits of modern life. Whether conceived or merely chosen, the germ and development thereof should be engendered in a thoroughly æsthetic atmosphere.

Inner Beauty and outer Beauty are to be the subsequent results of conception and cultivation of the fundamental idea.

As regards the subject and subject-matter and dramatic idea, it ought to be exposed to the constant influence of æsthetic sentiments and of practicability of staging in connection with *Music*. This is better explained under the particular heads. A good idea of it is to be obtained by comparing and contrasting the pictorial and other aspects of Wagner's works with those of various operas. They are artistic. They show a delicate taste in the selection and arrangement of details, quite aside from the Music. There is a characteristic evasion of the disgusting, and coarse, and commonplace and unpicturesque in the details. The composer of the Music-Drama ought to possess the delicate sensitiveness of the painter and poet as regards the selection of the multitude of material objects and spiritual affairs entering into his work.

Intimately associated with this conscious or instinctive pursuit of the beautiful in an art sense, is the avoidance of much that surrounds us in our everyday life and solicits our attention or dulls our sense of the



Beautiful as possible to the enthusiastic phantasy. Wagner was very careful about his surroundings during the composing of a work, and his correspondence makes frequent mention of the difficulties of conceiving an ideal world in adverse surroundings. Perhaps music aided his imagination. It seems so easy to follow a conception already completed, such as that offered by his works, that we easily fall into the way of supposing the original conception of *Lohengrin*, *Tannhäuser*, *Tristan*, *The Ring*, and *Parsifal* were very simple matters. As a matter of fact the 'ideal world' referred to is extremely difficult to inhabit while in converse with the actual world.

It was part of Wagner's theory that the Art of Painting should lend its aid to the Music-Drama. Withal, the use of elaborate Scenery as an accompaniment of the Drama seems to be a modern development—to have developed along with the rise of the theatre as we know and understand it, a roofed building set apart for performances of Drama, lighted artificially, and provided with complicated apparatus for the placing of the scenery. (Of stage arrangements of opera house in Paris.) The open-air theatre of the ancient Greeks was obviously unfitted for the display of such attempts at imitations of natural scenery as the modern theatre represents. The stage of Shakespeare's time seems to have dispensed with anything except mere indications of the nature of a scene.

Wagner's idea is unusual in so far as it not only proposes 'Scenery,' but also that the stage as a whole shall present a series of paintings rivalling the products of Painting as a separate Art in beauty and loftiness. Moreover, the scenery is not to be mere surprising spectacular effects, detracting from the dramatic action, but rather so agreeing in tone with the dramatic situations that it will add force to the dramatic effect of the situations.

The deliberate seeking for the most beautiful effects in scenes foreshadows an Art of Scenery Painting in a new idealistic style. There are two moments in the process: the *conception* of the beautiful and lofty scenes, which devolves on the compiler of the action; the *execution* of the conceptions with reference to Painting as a high Art. This presupposes the author of the Music to be endowed with a keen sense of pictorial beauty, and a school of scene-painters capable of carrying out the conceptions that they may realise the author's desired effect with reference to the dramatic action. That the whole idea differs from the usual one concerning the relation of Dramatic Art to Painting is shown by the different mode of procedure which is proposed. It has been deemed sufficient to write a Drama, and then *supply* it with whatever *mise-en-scène* its situations called for, not to keep in mind a pictorial situation from the very beginning. Moreover, since the Drama itself was seldom 'idealistic,' it called for no higher effort on the part of the scene-painter than a more or less close imitation of objects which he could see every day. The Music-Drama, on the contrary, calls for an essential participation of pictorial Art in its *conception*, it proposes to please the eye of the spectator with Paintings as well as delight his ear with Music. Hence, the Drama should be conceived in 'terms of Painting' *from the beginning*, that is, one of the motives to its conception should be the love of the loftiest pictorial fancies of which the artistic mind is capable. The Music-Drama cannot hope to vie with naturalistic Drama *in power*, it proposes to outvie it in beauty and loftiness, and not without reasonable hopes of success, for it has at its disposal several of the most beautiful agencies which the human mind has been able to devise—orchestral and vocal Music, most beautiful fancies of the poet, and the Art of highly imaginative Painting including representations of Architecture. So far as means are concerned, the Music-Drama is fully equipped to vie with any work of Art, for it wields the highest Arts which man has devised. The Music-Drama is compelled to renounce the dramatic power of realism, but in exchange it has gained the privilege of freely wielding the recognised Arts of beauty and nobility. Just therein also lies its weakness before a world which judges it from the standpoint of older Arts without appreciating the unique character of its Style. For instance, the critics

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who can see nothing but Drama as a separate Art are horrified at the idea of allowing pictorial beauty to enter as an essential factor into the conception of the action. They see the destruction of all dramatic truth in this intrusion of a deliberate proposal to display what is *beautiful*. Quite right, perhaps, when referring to Drama in itself (for if we propose to imitate daily life, we cannot begin with the scenery in compiling our drama), but not at all justified towards an Art which has consciously *chosen* the beautiful effects of Painting as one of its prime factors, and, at the same time, rejects any efforts to imitate the aspects of modern everyday life. Canons of criticism relating to an existing Art must be intelligently altered if they are to be applied to a new and different Art. It is not a sufficient confutation of the foregoing to point to the deplorable effect of the craze for scenic effects in the case of the Opera. This point is subsequently cleared up.

*B*      *General Effect aimed at.*—We have an example in Architecture of an Art which does not move us to tears, but nevertheless takes its place as an Art despite of its deplorably evident lack of ‘dramatic realism.’

There is a particular reason why the Music-Drama is liable to suffer in striving to equal the independent Drama in dramatic intensity, namely the distraction of the mind by a multiplicity of the agencies which affect it.

*C 1*      If eye, and ear, and intellect are conjointly stimulated, there is danger  
*C 2* of over-stimulation, or rather of distraction of attention, leading either to weariness or to destruction of dramatic effect. (Cf. p. 126.)

The proposal to make a new Art by combining certain features of Music, Drama, and Painting, is particularly daring in a day which is exulting over the triumphs of Naturalism in Arts, high and small. People who are used to judging every art-work by the closeness with which it imitates actual persons and things, will hardly show much pity towards an Art which avowedly rejects close imitation. People whose critical sense is based on the photographic apparatus will easily detect the futility of any Art which places fanciful Beauty above slavish imitation. Scores of people will go into ecstasies over the ‘naturalness’ of a painting of various eatables where one will find interest in a poetic fancy in colour.

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*C 1*      As the action should be conceived in a pictorial spirit, so it should be conceived in a *musical* spirit, viz. in a spirit of repose and in a measured Style. The fault of the ‘Opera’ lay, not so much in its simple text, as in the inconsistencies between the text and the Music, including the total insincerity of the vocal part. Simplicity of the text is required—all sententiousness is out of place. The Opera would not have sinned in introducing the spectacular element had this itself been an organic and essential part of the Drama which it interrupted. The fault of ballet was not so much that it was spectacular, but rather that it was in itself *not beautiful*, and had no connection with the Drama into which it was interpolated.

*C 2*      not so much that it was spectacular, but rather that it was in itself *not beautiful*, and had no connection with the Drama into which it was interpolated.

*C 1*      This means that in general, the development of the dramatic seed must be carefully watched, or it will throw out too many sprouts. Its luxuriance must be carefully pruned. It dare not become complicated. It is conceivable that a dramaturgy of the dramatic plot of the Music-Drama

might be much simpler than that of pure Drama with its "plot" and "under plot," and various complications more or less intended and effective, and its excruciating mysteries and 'oracular irony.' The subject must avoid being too deep, viz. it should have a sensuous *face-value* which shall be artistically all-sufficient whether its sententiousness be comprehended or not. With the *proviso* that its depth shall not injure it, it may be deep enough to baffle the commentary-ists even. There is a very great difference between 'Schopenhauer in Wagner's works,' and the explicit philosophical excursions and side remarks of many modern poets. It is very easy to throw a word or two into a verse of poetry, which may suggest a world of Philosophy, but would be sadly destructive to the simple sensuous nature of Music.

(Note in this regard that much of the Poetry of the Brownings is very instructive as regards the Style of the Music-Drama, viz. in so far as it presents some of the most unlyrical situations and verse possible. It is worth while taking some portions of R. Browning's poems, and fancying them being sung in the 'general situation' of the words of a Music-Drama. Cf. p. 56.)

*Plastic Simplicity.*—In Sculpture we have a case of necessity for simplicity (due to the material and means of execution) and a suggestion of the way in which it is attained (Selection rigorously practised, viz. rejection of unimportant details, and massing, and suggestiveness). It is instructive to compare the dramas Wagner created with the rambling episodes out of which he drew his materials—a mass comparable to those modern bas-reliefs of battles, popular manifestations, etc., which are pervaded by startling objects in every square inch of their surface, a whole rabble of heads and figures huddled together into the precincts of those small squares of stone that sometimes ornament a public monument. The mind of the spectator looking at such a melodramatic muddle, experiences no deep impression of the totality, but is absorbed in successive details which do not reinforce each other. There is a simple boldness of treatment necessary that well applies to the Music-Drama when it is said that the action should be plastic, viz. sculpturesque.

The following principle holds in general for a Compound Art:—

Each part ought to be such that it would be less *effective* if taken by itself. The *Meister-singer* would make a good theme for a 'play' (notice the *length* of the text—130 pages). Perhaps Wagner went a little too far in his dramatic fulness and showed his dramatic tendencies too strongly for the Style of the Music-Drama. Notice its effect upon the Music (i. 2), where David displays at length the tortuous route of the apprentice and master. This, together with some of Wotan's dialogue and King Mark's, shows the nature of the unlyrical situation and ideas. If we condemn the worn-out *recitative secco* of Operas, we have grounds for finding fault with some of the tonal deserts of Wagner, in spite of their originality as contrasted with the hackneyed *recitative secco*. It seems probable that any argument for such passages on the basis of their *contrast* is not sanctioned by the general character of Music. For Music it is not valid to urge sticking pins into one's self in order to verify the *relief* which follows the removal of the pins and undoubtedly forms a

D

'contrast.' We are not dealing with *spoken* Drama. Moreover, it is not sufficient to aver that the Opera erred in occasionally treating such serious subject-matter in too joyous a musical strain. The point is that the Music-Drama should call for *no such prosaic situations* and their corresponding modes of expression.

This holds of the Vocal Style as well. That the Vocal Style should lack all musical beauty is as complete a mistake as could be made. The musical realism of some of Wagner's declamatory phrases (they are almost spoken phrases, cf. *Meistersinger*, Act i., Magdalene and Eva) has been much praised by some. The procedure is of doubtful merit. (Cf. *Siegfried*.) One attains thereby neither one nor the other effect, neither real language nor pleasing Music. It is presumable that the *raison d'être* of the Music-Drama is its *Music*.

Underlying these considerations will be recognised a principle of wide prevalence, that of the 'Æsthetic division of labour,' which asserts that 'an Art should cultivate the direction peculiar to itself springing out of the Materials employed, Tools, Mode of Execution (function of object, if any), æsthetic effects easiest attainable as distinguished from those obtaining in other Arts'; as a corollary, 'each part of a Compound Art should do the same within the bounds of consistency with the peculiar tendency of the Compound Art as a whole.' Cf. 'æsthetic specialisation' in *Questions*.

As regards the propriety of exposing R. Wagner's works to a calm, critical consideration, the attitude of Heinrich Bulthaupt seems strikingly reasonable (*Dramaturgie der Oper*, vol. ii. *The Ring*). In substance it amounts to about this. Wagner's works stand as monuments, and their astonishing merits serve to carry the hearer over features open to criticism. There is no more occasion for deeming them infallible in every respect than there is for applying to them the old worn-out rules of the stage. All that is demanded is that the few *faults* are not exalted into highest *virtues* to mislead future effort.

Judicious criticism refers, not so much to Wagner's works as to those which will (it is to be hoped) appear in answer to the question 'What next?' For it is to be hoped that such a glorious attempt at the realisation of a new Art will *not* remain for ever at the point of the works which Wagner has left to the world.

Here it may be remarked that it is questionable whether Wagner's tetralogy (or trilogy) —the *Ring*—can safely pose as the *norm* of proportions for subsequent imitation. Recognising in this colossal work a work of *national* importance, its extensiveness is more justified than might be the case under different circumstances than those of 'covering the field' of the Siegfried myths and that of the almost national performance of 1876 in Bayreuth. It is conceivable that Wagner was greatly stimulated by the materials offered him, and possibly by his intense leaning towards dramatic completeness—a tendency which greatly aided his reform. In spite of the resort to a multipart performance and numerous interlagomena requiring narrative scenes for their elucidation, the action of the *Ring* remains very complicated and difficult to grasp. For one thing, there is considerable *intrigue* entering into the action, and this in itself is of doubtful propriety in a Music-Drama, and necessitates considerable *explanations* or explanatory situations. In attempting to conceive clearly the *norm* of the Music-Drama it must not be forgotten how fiercely the mind is being stimulated by the many sensuous elements. Cf. the intrigue scenes in Verdi's *Otello*, notably that one in the second act (handkerchief scene) in which *Iago* succeeds, in spite of the audibility of sung dialogue at short range, and the exigencies of musical rhythm, etc.

C I

The ideas should be *presentative*, not reminiscent or prophetic. On the whole the memory should be taxed as little as possible. This would be the place to inquire what mental faculties require a minimum of expenditure of energy, but the subject belongs more to Æsthetics in general. One might also say that those mental faculties of the auditors should be most catered to which are 'pure human' in the sense of most primitive in the mental development of Man.

Reasoning with symbols. —  
 Compound reasoning.  
 Simple reasoning.  
 Conception.  
 Perception.  
 Feeling.  
 Sensation.



This list, read from below upwards, may serve to display roughly the theoretical steps in the ladder of mental activities going towards the intellect. The mental reverberations resulting from exposure of the mind to the stimuli caused by an art-work may be fancied as spreading gradually upward and awakening these successive activities of the mind until they end in the purely abstract and scientific activity of the *study* of art-works. The upper rounds are exhilarating, but very risky, and woe betide the art-work that proposes to enjoy the upper rounds without a good sensuous basis or æsthetic face-value to keep it from that negative, but effective, death of lapse into desuetude as the ages roll on.

C 1

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D

This refers also to the poetic 'figures of speech' employed. They are by no means alike. Some may be very difficult. On the whole they should fulfil the conditions of (A) not suggesting the outer aspects of everyday life in its modern phases; (B) they should be highly *æsthetical*; (C) they should *aid* the mind in comprehending the Drama, and should themselves be easy of comprehension (C 1), viz. simple and sensuous (B); (D) they should be emotional in character rather than idyllic or epic, viz. their suggestiveness should be in the direction of the dramatic action, and not distracting or abstract.

*Nature of Drama in General.*—Viewing Drama as a human product arising slowly through a course of trial and rejection, it is interesting to note that it has been guided by human feeling into a field which is perhaps the most fit—the more purely human field of *volition*.

Man stands apart from animals more in respect to his will-power than any other faculty. Hence, if we wished to brew an Art which should be as human as possible, and exciting at the same time, we should found it on that highly human act—the *act of volition*. At the same time we should be choosing the most exciting or stimulating feature of man's life, for the act of volition is the very battle ground of our inner life. "Shall I do this, shall I do that"?—I am forced to do one or the other, and yet upon the one may rest life, and upon the other may rest death. This forced choice of ways which lead to heaven or to hell is the most momentous act in its solution that we can conceive of. Note that this act is often surrounded in plays by appurtenances such as ink and paper, in order to fix the attention of the auditors more vividly on the decisive act.

*D* That the 'act of volition' is the very essence of Drama may be seen in the likeness of development of drama and an act of volition. It is as if a drama were itself merely a gigantic act of volition. There is the 'opening' or the setting forth of the motives to the act of volition; next comes the 'growth' in which the springs of action are drawn more tense; the 'height' or 'climax' is reached at the most momentous part of the act of volition, where the mental decision is demanded and given. Now comes the act itself—the performance of that inner resolution, and the drama proceeds through the 'fall,' or consequence of that act, to the momentous 'catastrophe' which closes the drama, and stamps the act of volition as vain and fatal, and crushes the victim like the sledge of Fate. The development of a drama may be taken as a mere extension and elaboration of an 'act of volition': Drama, as a whole, is a living commentary on that feature of our lives, the 'act of volition.' The importance of this for Music-Drama is seen under Leading Motives, p. 90; and compare the very intimate relation between Emotions, Motives, and Act of Volition.

Moreover, we are here enabled to see the reason why *Drama* and *morals* are so closely associated. Moral action is founded upon the 'act of volition.' Drama is founded upon the act of volition. This is the meeting point of the two departments. Objectively, we see this meeting point in the fact that the majority of tragedies are founded upon some *moral* conflict. In other words, the *particular* 'act of volition' chosen for dramatic exposition is generally one not of a mere arbitrary character, like the choice of one road rather than another, or even a smooth road rather than a rough path, but the act of choosing a path which is not public, which lies across fields which are *trespassed* upon by walking through them, which are contrary to the conventions (more or less reasonable) of society.

Dramas being usually the exposition of a phase of immorality, the question for the Music-Drama arises, "Is the phase of immorality amenable to our Canons?" Can a crime be lyric? Ought the particular phase of immorality in act or desire chosen (conceived) for a music-drama to be peculiar in any way?

The Canons can be applied, and a comparison of R. Wagner's works with Operas shows that he appreciated the point fully.

(A) The crime should not be one suggestive of distinctively modern life. (B) The phase of immorality should be a poetic, a romantic one, and not physically unæsthetic (there is a great difference between physical filth and immorality). (C) and (D) The crime should be æsthetical in the sense of simple, not complicated, and of an emotional nature, not arising from or consisting in mere intellectual reasoning. It should be due to feeling (D), display human probability (C 2), and not be a merely local phase of immorality. That forgery (cf. Scott's *Marmion*) does not satisfy the above detailed conditions will be evident upon consideration.

## 2. SITUATIONS.

This leads us directly to the kind of 'Situations' \* most fitted to the Style of Music-Drama. We have seen that an exalted form of expression, lofty poetic diction or song, is totally unfitted to apply to commonplace situations which call for no other means of expression than ordinary speech, and sometimes very little of that. The kitchen or the bourse does not call for

B

A

\* 'Situations' is here employed in a different sense from its ordinary acceptation. Instead of signifying any of those *special* dramatic moments (thrilling climaxes, tableaux, etc.) the word is meant to refer to any and every 'moment.' In fact, for the purposes of our treatment, *all* the 'moments' are of equal importance in the sense that each one depends upon the others for its effectiveness and *raison d'être*. A little consideration on the part of the reader will make it clear that some term is needed to denote those successive 'moments' of states and circumstances which may be symbolised in the succession of pictures (*tableaux vivants*) presented to the eye. Some of these dramatic moments may *seem* more crucial, more effective than others, but as regards the dramatic development they are of equal importance, and none could be dispensed with without injury to the dramatic effect. The *status quo* of the stage (particularly as revealed to the mind through the *eye*) at any one time, together with the circumstances of orchestral accompaniment and musical dialogue, will be termed situation. It is almost the same as 'scenes,' but 'scene' has a troublesome special application to denote a part of an 'act,' and, besides, suggests the scenic, or outer side, whereas we wish to understand the side of the dramatic action, or inner side, as well. Probability assumes here quite a different aspect from the usual one in Drama, for each and every one of the situations in the Music-Drama is improbable from the naturalistic standpoint, and yet there is another sense in which 'probability' is of very great importance—it is that of lyrical probability. (B, C 2, C 3, C 3a, D and E; cf. Higher Realism, p. 14.)

C 2

As regards the relation between situation and the action, the situations may be compared to a continuous series of instantaneous photographs of the stage, giving so many thousands of pictures which may be looked at separately, but which ought to give the total dramatic effect only when they follow each other in the sequence designed by the dramatist. Let one fancy the effect of their being displayed as "animated photographs," but *reversed* in order from their original order, viz. completely reversing that theoretical sequence of *exposition, growth, climax, fall, catastrophe*.

*Situation* is what vanishes when the action is told in so many words without reference to the detailed way in which it takes place in the representation of the drama. Thus most "Guides to the Opera" display the *action* without reference to the particular scenes and the attitudes of the various personages towards each other in the various scenes.

General situation, too, vanishes when the action is thus narrated—abstracted from the concrete presentations of the sense of the actual stage-performance. These, or a mental representation of them, are necessary factors in forming a judgment about Style in the sense attached to it in this work. The narrative of the action in indirect discourse with use of the abstract and colourless "he," "she," "they," etc., gives us no more idea of the actual appearances of the personæ than a *resumé* of the dialogue in indirect discourse gives one an idea whether the original direct dialogue was colloquial speech, poetic diction, recitative, or song. To employ a simile from Decorative Art, whether a design is stylistic or not, cannot be determined from a mere judgment passed upon the figures drawn on paper. Until the design has been translated in terms of some concrete materials under certain conditions of mode of execution and tools, it cannot accurately be pronounced stylistic.

*D* rhapsodies in the way of high-flown dialogue or for 'recitative.' The situation should be one in which there is an actual exaltation of the senses of the personages—one in which energy is accumulated like electricity in a storm-cloud until it breaks forth in vivid lightning. Calm domestic life does not furnish materials for situations which are to be intentionally stimulating to the audience. Unless the situation be one in which the actors are excited or exalted there is no reason why they should not use the language of everyday life. High poetic diction and song are forms of expression suited to an abnormal emotional condition, and to this condition *only* are they proper. Situations where the intellect only is concerned—as in a financial transaction between two brokers—do not call for blank verse *D* even, much less for the 'recitative' which some Operas offer. It will be noticed that these emotional situations, like the idealistic Drama in general, are marked by their 'removal from our ordinary life'—the three *A* meals a day, business duties, and sleep. Unless this be effected, the situations will unavoidably suggest contemporaneous life, and hence render the unnaturalness of the presence of Music so forcible that disgust or ridicule will follow.

*Why* such a situation as that of Indians scalping the crew of a ship to the accompaniment of orchestral Music is so absurd, requires considerable analysis to explain. But the falsity of such a situation upon the stage can be felt immediately by a spectator. Likewise it is possible to test points of natural affiliation (or harmony) by representing them vividly in one's mind, and the reader is recommended to mentally represent various situations from daily life in connection with orchestral accompaniment and musical dialogue. His feelings or his reason will often enable him to cast out some as highly unlyric, and retain others as less unlyric. If the two sets of situations be generalised as regards their qualities and contrasted mentally it may be possible to determine why one set is inconsistent with the *à priori* conditions of 'lyric situation' of the Music-Drama, and the other consistent. By this 'mental laboratory' test the following situations will *A* probably be found more or less unlyrical:—

Scene in butcher's shop.

„ in kitchen.

„ in public-house.

„ in House of Commons

„ of conversation in drawing-room.

„ in stables.

„ in police court.

„ scientific meeting.

„ of author compiling a treatise.

„ of author trying to get the same published.

„ in saw-mill, etc.



This method of mental trial and rejection is by no means limited to the Music-Drama. The highly unpoetical character of much Poetry might be roughly tested by *singing* the same, and in general the field of fittest subject-matter for an Art may often be determined by a determination of the most *unfitted* subject-matter.

Another method of approaching the subject is to inquire into operas as to what situations are most palpably unlyrical. A feature of this investigation is that where the opera contains spoken dialogue as well as recitative and song, there is liable to be a gradation from the non-lyric character of the spoken situations (through the semi-lyric situations of the recitative to the most lyric situations associated with full musical treatment).

What is meant by a *lyrical* action is indicated clearly enough by Wagner's works, if one will only take the trouble to discern it in the works; the test which is suggested of such an action being its unfitness for any other form of representation than that of the Music-Drama. Thus the actions of *Lohengrin*, *Tannhäuser*, and *Parsifal* have only to be conceived as spoken Dramas to discern their eminent unfitness for that mode of performance. On the other hand, it is conceivable that *Rienzi* might form a tolerable drama for the stage just as it had previously been employed for a novel. In the form of poetical diction *Tannhäuser* even would sound comparatively tame as compared with it in 'Opera' form, and the situation of *Tannhäuser* breaking into his praise of Venus (acts i. and ii.) is a lyrical one in that it fairly *demand*s Music for its expression and would be less effective in spoken dialogue. In fact, it might be difficult to prevent such a figure as *Lohengrin* from becoming *ridiculous* in a spoken drama. Fancy his arrival drawn by the swan in complete silence as contrasted with the effect of the exhilarating music which accompanies this scene, raising our minds to the proper height and preventing it from becoming an anti-climax. The loftiness of the general æsthetic character of these works almost demands Music to make it seem natural. The mind of the average person is not very tolerant towards an action and characters that are all pitched "way up in the clouds." The average man may very naturally feel that the figure of *Lohengrin* carrying on a conversation in spoken drama was a little too exalted, a little too finely drawn, too lacking in those healthy money-making impulses of life; and as for the whole situation of a heaven-sent messenger coming in answer to the prayer of a beautiful maiden in distress who in her turn had seen this valiant saviour in a vision, all this without that transcendental atmosphere of instrumental Music would seem rather far-fetched. Imagine what an important element Music is of the scenes of the arrival of *Lohengrin*, the easy victory over his opponent, the revelation of his identity in his narrative, and his departure. The same holds for a great deal of *Parsifal*, as can be discerned by inspection and applying the above test. The whole of this matter is intimately associated with those qualities of Music discussed under qualities *A* and *B*, for not only does Music require such highly ideal actions, but they, in their turn, demand Music to prevent them from becoming vague and weak and ludicrous. It has been remarked with a great deal of truth with regard to libretti and songs that what was too stupid to say, one sang. Now this in a somewhat different form may serve to illustrate what the Style required for the Music-Drama should be. What is unfitted to be spoken, but adapted to be sung, is fitted to the Music-Drama, viz. what cannot be said in language alone—that which is too vague and delicate and lofty for speech, is specially fitted to enter into the Music-Drama. In Painting, even, an attempt to depict an exceedingly intense and transcendental expression of face is liable to impress the ordinary spectator as ludicrous. (Cf. paintings by Sir Edward Burne-Jones.)

So with every part; it should conform to this test of being indispensable to the other parts of the Music-Drama, while being comparatively ineffective when taken *alone*. Thus the ideal *situation* is one to which Music is indispensable, but its peculiarity is very

liable to make it more or less ridiculous or far-fetched when viewed independent of its accompaniments in the total work. So with the relations between the vocal and instrumental parts; they are to be so close that either one would be incomplete and vapid without the other. This is true of much of Wagner's music. Taken by itself the succession of vocal tones is very dissatisfying (unless we mentally and unconsciously supply the harmonic colouring), viz. they do not, like many 'songs,' satisfy the mind as 'one-line' music without any accompaniment. Likewise with the orchestral part; if performed without the vocal part it would be lacking in something, although we might not be able to say just why the *hiatus* existed. Compare in this regard the intimate relation between the vocal part and the instrumental part in the *Nornen-scene* with which the *Götterdämmerung* opens. The musical 'intervals' in the vocal part, taken by itself, seem outrageous, but the way they accentuate and complete the harmony of the instrumental part and themselves become imbued with some musical sense is quite remarkable, especially in view of the fact that this scene is perhaps otherwise unfavourable.

It is probably this quality which renders slightly offensive that procedure of taking the dramatic part of one of Wagner's works by itself and discussing the *character* of each personage; a procedure that becomes sacrilegious in proportion as it approaches a comparison of the figure with one in modern life. To discuss the character of Lohengrin, or Amfortas, or Parsifal, as if they were men in modern streets and drawing-rooms, has a tendency to occasion just a slight twinge of disgust in those who know these characters as musical figures only, viz. as figures into which the musical situation enters as an essential element. It is one thing to discuss 'the characters' in a novel of Dickens, and quite a different thing to discuss the character of Wagner's figures. It is something like the use of Mr. in connection with the names Lohengrin, Tannhäuser, Parsifal.

(4) requires that the situations should one and all differ, as regards their outer aspects, from those we are accustomed to in everyday life. Of course this proscribes any modern street scenes, kitchens, etc., but this is rather a part of Scenery (10). If the reader will bring vividly before his mind 'in close juxtaposition' street scenes, drawing-room scenes from the stage presenting modern life, etc., in connection with orchestral accompaniment and musical dialogue, he will grasp more vividly what is meant by this embargo than he would from any description.

It is not merely necessary that the situations should be unlike 'the outer aspects of everyday life,' but they should further make it clear once for all that they do not *propose* to imitate contemporary life in its outer visible aspects.

The mode of entry of Lohengrin serves to sustain the idealistic nature of the whole of the succeeding scenes, and stamps the supernatural character of Lohengrin once for all. Likewise the Venusberg scene with which *Tannhäuser* opens. Contrast these with opening of *Lucile*.

One of the perplexing problems of the Style of situations fitted to the unnatural conditions of the Music-Drama is the situation of a *crowd* entering into a scene, and especially a singing chorus entering into the dramatic action.

The sentiments of a mob of burly plebeians with regard to the Church or with regard to a 'tribune' (as in *Rienzi*); or their sentiments towards the nobles; these are ridiculous when expressed in song: everyone must feel that the natural deference to realism in matters which are so palpably

*real* is being ignored for the sake of introducing a little effective choral singing—effective as Music perhaps, but ridiculous as a historic situation. Even where there is no accompanying Music as in a *play* (Schiller's *Tell* for instance), but concerted speech only, the situation is felt to be strained.

It seems too highly improbable that a real crowd should ever experience an emotion so uniformly (as is inevitably suggested by concerted musical expression) and so highly *lyric*, that it would ever find its expression in that most artificial of activities—concerted action to the preciseness of musical rhythm. Everyone must have felt this to a greater or less extent in observing such situations in 'Operas' (cf. Boieldieu's *La Dame Blanche*, auction scene, etc., Verdi's *Traviata* and *Trovatore*), in which the suggestions of everyday life made the unfitness exasperatingly vivid. A crowd is one of the most unlyrical of situations. However, the whole problem is different if the action distinctly and naturally *calls* for a chorus-situation, and further if the action strictly avoids suggesting the outer aspects of everyday life. That a crowd of workmen in active life should express their feelings in chorus-form seems highly absurd, but we are not prepared to assert that a group of angels might not find concerted musical expression quite natural. If the situation be highly ideal *ab initio*, it will hardly challenge criticism as so many operas do.

It is gratifying that the last Drama of Wagner, *Parsifal*, was of such a nature as to spontaneously *require* choral Music—and, at that, choral Music of the most effective kind—sacred chorus. However, it is probably more important for the development of the Music-Drama that Wagner was able to incite himself to the composition of the Music of such enthusiastic love-scenes as *Tannhäuser*, act ii.; *Meistersinger*, act iii.; *Walküre*, act i.; *Siegfried*, last scene; *Götterdämmerung*, act i. sc. 1; *Tristan*, act ii. sc. 2. These are the scenes in which Music plays the part of real *emotion*, and withal they represent the *norm*.

In other words, the improbability of the chorus-situation depends upon the general situation of whether the scene and action suggest our everyday life. Note that the chorus of priests in Mozart's *Magic Flute* is not half so offensive to our sense of the actual as it might be, considering the number of jumps from spoken dialogue to chorus, to musical dialogue, etc. It is probable that in this case, the whole scene is so far removed from the aspects of everyday life that we forget to use our critical weapons. However, we usually require a faint hue of dramatic probability about chorus situations.

In any case, the point in Part 7 (C 2), concerning the breaking up of words and phrases in a cold-blooded professional manner holds, for the most idealistic situation even. The denial of emotion thereby and of sincerity, and the difficulties of understanding the words on the part of the audience all relegate such musical practices to the field of independent Music. All such features are related to real miracle, somewhat as the representation of a scene in false perspective in Painting is related

to miracle. No one can doubt that angels *might* macerate their words beyond recognition, for no one doubts their ability in the artificial part 23 of Music, but that angels would deliberately do so in connection with earthly affairs and sincere emotions is quite another matter. (Cf. Scene of Bethlehem and Birth of Christ.)

As a part of this question it might be noticed that chorus parts are seldom properly treated on the ordinary stage. A chorus is difficult to drill, is seldom musically satisfactory, and is one of the most *frequent distracting* elements of the Lyric and Music-Drama. Their musical rendition and acting often forcibly suggest to the spectator the hours of practice behind the scenes and the vanity thereof.

Music imposes too strict conformity in time, tempo, etc., to be wholly consistent with the heterogeneous ways in which a crowd is given to express itself. A street scene or a political caucus inevitably suggests *speech* or *noise*. (Note that here, again, it will not do to bring forward the street scene in *Meistersinger*, end of act ii., as displaying the norm of lyric situations for *serious* works dealing with the sublime.)

A crowd inevitably suggests the real world, whereas a single actor is like one's self; when alone we feel as if we *were removed* from the real world, and analogy suggests the same thing when we see the sole actor untrammelled and unembarrassed by a crowd of observers. The feeling is subtle—difficult to explain, but it can be distinctly *felt*. One feels as if he breathed more freely when alone. In the presence of others he will not allow his fancy to soar so freely, and he lays a severe embargo upon his *actions*. To a certain extent the ideal or phantastic world is destroyed when a crowd of observing eyes are directed upon one. (Cf. "Three's a crowd.")

One must not outdo himself in trying to prove everything by Wagner's works, for he is sure to find difficulties with the *Meistersinger* and its quintett (over the footlights) and chorus of burghers, and 'soliloquising' and musically artificial form in parts. We shall have something more to say of the *Meistersinger* later. Here it will suffice to say that the *Meistersinger* can no more be taken as a guide in defining the Style of the serious Music-Drama than *Rienzi* can. If one or more angels even were presented in its situation of singing to the audience over the footlights, it would involuntarily excite suggestions of *prima donnas*, etc., who did the same, and the whole sentiment would be corrupted. It should be noted, however effective the device of 'avoiding the static external appearances of our everyday life' may be, yet there are some situations which suggest that everyday life so forcibly, or its mode of representation upon the Stage, that special precautions are necessary or entire avoidance expedient. Some of these situations are mentioned in the following paragraphs.

'Side remarks' on the stage savour in spoken Drama even of unnatural revelations to the audience. In sung dialogue they savour of worse. Where such side expressions are made in musical dialogue in the *presence of other persons* on the stage, the situation of secrecy proposed is simply ludicrous. It only suggests some modern stage situation without offering the same excuse of subdued speech.

One of the absurdities of the 'Opera' was a whole row of figures, each one singing his own hidden thoughts to himself (and to the audience over the footlights). Quite aside from the impossibility of each and all making themselves heard at one time (cf. Quartett *versus* Naturalism and Comprehensibility), this situation shows the difficulties of determining the Style by casuistry. (Cf. the church scene in Gounod's *Faust*. Just as we

wonder that the worshippers do not *see* Marguerite, so we wonder they do not *hear* her. Cf. also *Fidelio*.)

One must distinguish between poetic license and some practices which might come under that head. Thus there is a great difference between the introduction of miracle into a Music-Drama, and the practice of prima donnas 'singing over the footlights.' However idealistic the dramatic action may be, if it is intended to be taken seriously, it must suffer from the afore-mentioned practice which has an air of being heartlessly *insincere*. Vocal display *felt to be such* is an entirely different matter from that intentional disregard of the realities and probabilities of outer life discussed in *A* and *B*. The matter of insincerity has reference to the *inner* side of the Drama (see p. 109). C4

Historical situations are seldom lyrical for the very obvious reason that they deal with real life which was not accompanied by an orchestra nor conducted in musical dialogue, and further because history deals with 'relations' which do not spring from the emotions, or feelings, but from *social relations* which are obviously too complex to be lyric. (Lyric in the sense of—fitted for expression in a musical situation, simple, beautiful, emotional, and singable.) The real lyrical world is the purely emotional world, and this is rarely to be found in history.

Among some of the situations which are proscribed by reason of the *practical difficulties* are battles. These may be well represented as an Art that is not 'immediately presentative' (cf. Scott's *Marmion*, and Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and prose descriptions of battles). It is with difficulty that such armies as are presented to us on the stage can be tolerated (cf. economical performances of Shakespeare). A *musical battle* can exist by the greatest license only. It is an imposition upon Music and probability. Of course, anything like a modern pitched battle with intricate arrangements and military manœuvres is about as little fitted to stage representation as it would be to depiction in statuary or bas-relief. It is surprising to notice how ineffective some paintings are in which there is a really careful attempt to represent some extensive modern battle as a whole. There is something singularly business-like and smoky, and confused, unpictorial, and impersonal about modern warfare that contrasts strikingly with a Homeric vignette or a description of a mediæval tournament or joust. Modern warfare, with all its ingenious devices for destroying large numbers of men at a time, is far inferior, from an Art standpoint, to the simple arrangements of former days when a man knew who it was he was trying to kill, and wasted little brain tissue in devising painless and humanitarian methods. A

The 'dying scene' is not strictly *lyrical* for physiological reasons as well as naturalistic probability. A disinterested chorus as spectators of the same is not a lyric situation (cf. Gounod's *Faust*). The death of Siegfried is very skilfully treated by Wagner, and the inspiring Music A,  
C2,  
C3a,  
D

makes criticism difficult. However, it is probable that such situations as dying heroes engaging in lyric explanations would be better avoided if possible. Cf. Verdi's *Otello*, last scene.

*B* (*B*) requires that the Music-Drama should strive to present in its situations something more beautiful, more lofty, than mere *genre* pictures; that it should avoid the commonplace and ugly, except as the latter may be employed for contrast (the dwarf Mime in *Siegfried*). So long as the fancy of the artist can devise any situations between persons that are more pleasant to contemplate than the actual situations of everyday life, there is no reason why we should simply copy dull life as we see it. Certainly such situations as 'the awakening of Brunhilde by Siegfried,' 'the entry of the Gods into Walhall,' the ending of *Götterdämmerung* and of *Parsifal*, present pictures which are more beautiful and loftier than scenes from the Stock Exchange or the kitchen. If there is anything we can be thankful to Wagner for, it is that he has pointed the way to scenes of ideal beauty on the stage.

*C 1* (*C 1*) proscribes situations which are involved, which puzzle the mind to comprehend what the relations are between the characters. 'Modern' plays and 'historical' plays present situations in which the relations between the characters are so involved that an effort of the mind is required to follow (understandingly) the play of sentiments, and such an effort would be fatal to the appreciation of *Music*, which solicits our attention every moment. This is one reason for limiting the number of characters, for each one added increases the difficulty of distinguishing and 'placing' each character in whatever situation he may appear. We shall see later how the Music-Drama can somewhat lessen the perplexity by distinctive and symbolical costumes and 'attributes,' but the chief solution is in reducing the characters to the lowest possible number. Anyone who has remarked how studiously the long list of 'personæ' in some 'historical' play is perused by the spectator anxious to know who's who, will appreciate the advantage of few characters in the Music-Drama. Just as the sculptor avoids the representation of multitudes in his groups or bas-reliefs, so the Music-Drama should present a 'plastic simplicity' in its characters and situations. The ideal would be a play displaying such situations throughout that each would *explain itself*, like paintings that do not require an explanatory text.

*C 2* That each situation should spring clearly and naturally from the one preceding it, is evidently necessary to the easy understanding of the situations.

*B* The 'terrible' situation which is so much in demand by the blasé audiences of modern theatres is highly unfit for the Music-Drama.

In the first place, the Style of Music which we have proposed as most fitting to the noble character of the Music-Drama excludes any Music which is absolutely 'terrible.' No doubt, a pitiless master of cacophonic

*B*

effects might work upon an audience in a most startling manner, for he has them in his power; the ears are not provided with lids. No speech is capable of grating upon the nerves with the refined keenness of unmusical combinations. But notwithstanding the opportunities offered, the thrillingly terrible situation is better left to the modern sensational play, where death by fire or water can be managed without a 'trace of idealism.' The Style of the Music-Drama does not call upon the spectator to *participate* in its situations but to *contemplate* them. It purports to be an *art-work* which we can look upon without feeling ourselves greatly inconvenienced. The thirst for excruciating situations can be stilled by the products of other 'Arts.' The skull and cross-bones may be a good motive for tombstones, but Music is able to present Death in a less material aspect in its impressive funeral marches. In high Art it is rather the *poetic reflection* of the 'terrible' that is fitting than dramatic excruciation or physical repulsiveness. Contrast the treatment of death in a medieval monument and a wax-works show respectively.

If the Music of the Music-Drama be really worthy of our attention, then that calm mood which is necessary to its appreciation should not be troubled by the absorbing sympathy a sensational play strives to excite. That æsthetical mood is more in place, in which we approach a statue or a work of Architecture, and this is very different from a highly excited mood.

We must feel that we are looking at a work of art *framed within the oblong outlines of the stage*, just as a painting is shown to be a painting by its frame. Here we touch one of the most difficult points in the Music-Drama where considerable casuistry is required to reconcile the emotional side and the *repose* side. This will be discussed in Part 8.

How necessary an understanding of the 'measured' Style of the Music-Drama is may be seen from the conditions which obtain in the case of Wagner's works on the average stage. They are often ruined because some singer wishes to gain applause by his or her "wonderful dramatic rendering."

*Too much rushing about the stage* is sure to distract from the Music. The stage should present a 'settled' appearance—if the hearers' attention is not to be called away from the Music. The least bit of overplaying may ruin many bars of Music.

The situation of explaining in musical dialogue or soliloquy the events preceding the opening of the action is unfitted for musical presentation, and is even unfitted for the spoken Drama when very long and complicated.

Its propriety in the novel is indisputable, for here the text may be carefully read and *re-read*. To follow a long narrative of complicated events requires an effort, even if the dialogue be *spoken*, but when we renounce the instrument of complicated and distinct *speech*, and employ musical discourse instead, the situation is proscribed for three reasons.

First, because it requires an intellectual effort in grasping and retaining the facts narrated, which is subversive of the sensuous effect of the Music ;

B

C I

C I  
C I  
& B

*D* secondly, it is not immediately presentative and is very liable to be unemotional as well; and thirdly, because the situation infallibly suggests a real  
*A* situation in which *speech* is the proper medium of conveying the ideas of the narrative.

(*C* 2, see next part, *Action*.)

*C* 3 The firing of rifles or pistols is opposed to Music, as are shrieks. The sword and spear are more musical weapons, in that they do not interrupt the Music by their use, or spoil its effect by a shock (p. 108).

*C* 3 A Lyrical Art requires its love-scene and love-element; a spoken  
 & Drama, like Ibsen's *Volksfeind*, can exclude this and deal with the more  
*D* complex relations of individuals, society, money, etc. Likewise the *Novel*, from its descriptive scope and its length and definite means of expression, can deal with political complexities even. (Cf. Scott's novels.)

*D* That a situation should be 'emotional' requires that the relations  
 & amongst the participating characters should be such as to excite emotions  
*E* in each other 'on the spot.' The *present* emotion is important here, and one feature of this is that each particular situation should be emotional *in itself*; that it should not require too much deduction on the part of the spectator in order to render it tragical. The relations between the characters in each situation should be *personal*—should not depend on absent persons and distant occurrences. The relations should be that of "I" and "you"; the characters should have emotions excited in them by that very situation of affairs present, and not be absorbed in a discussion of some other person or persons, or some other events. The essential fitness of musical discourse is that it should be the irrepressible expression of some *present* emotion. The ideal 'lyrical' situation is one in which two persons are intensely moved by the very fact of their presence together, without any reference to absent persons or past events. *Only* under those circumstances is the exalted mode of expression, song, completely natural, whereas a calm discussion of absent things ("him," "they," or "it") suggests *conversation*—viz. speech—as the best means of 'telling it,' and renders song and recitative a little ridiculous. This is one reason why the 'love-scene' is so singularly *lyrical*. The lyrical situation *par excellence* is that in which the present situation calls for those emotions which compel to an exalted mode of expression (Music). That the personal pronouns 'I' and 'you' should predominate over the colder and impersonal pronoun 'it,' is evident. The person should be addressing the object which excites his emotion, not telling something about somebody else as disinterested 'relations.' The one expressing the emotions should be the one who is stimulated by the very emotions which he expresses. Of course, this 'duett' situation is not always attainable in a Drama, but its fitness to Music is shown by the way in which Music is often able to assert its mastery (by assuming the 'song' form) in such situations, where in others it is obliged to renounce its 'song' form for 'recitative.'



The presence of a 'means of expression' calls for something *impelling* to expression—that is, an emotional spring. E

To be *emotional* the situation should be highly *personal*—it should lie between the 'I' and 'you' of the persons *concerned*.

Hence the undramatic character of the singing chorus, which, however, is permissible if the action be highly ideal, and such a situation be called for by the action. Cf. *Parsifal*.

The situations should be as far as possible '*immediately presentative*,' C 1  
viz. they should have reference to the *status quo* of affairs, and contain as far as possible the germs of their own explanation *within themselves*. To revert to the analogy of instantaneous photographs (p. 28), each picture ought to suggest as far as possible the explanation of such a situation as it displays. We can all recall cases of paintings, seen for the first time at exhibitions, which baffled the ordinary ingenuity as to what they represented, and some of which depended very much upon the descriptive letterpress of the catalogue for their comprehension and effect. So it is with the situations in a drama. They should *be* a drama, not a conversation about one. They should necessitate as little activity as possible of those mental faculties depending upon a representation of things not directly present to the eye and ear. This is rather a difficult point because it does not severely hold for paintings or spoken Drama. We have time to ponder over the first and can read an explanation, and the great instrument—speech—of the second insures comprehension, but would not do so if the mind were engaged in listening to and enjoying a symphony at the same time. A very good way to get a clear idea of what is meant by a strictly *presentative* situation is to imagine a moving panorama of paintings displayed to a spectator, and to fancy the *rate at which the pictures* were presented to his eye to be gradually increased. We can easily see that those pictures which required a summoning of complicated historical facts, etc., would be likely to suffer more and more, with the increasing frequency of replacement of one picture by the next. The rate would finally compel the eye to reap the purely sensuous gratification of the pictures, as if each were a pure decorative juxtaposition of colours and figures, on pain of losing everything. Now the situations offered by the Music-Drama should approximate to the latter condition of simplicity. Their *sequence* should be a dramatic one. Each should naturally proceed from the preceding one, but should not compel the mind of the spectator C 2 to *summon* the former one from its grave of the past. For all this time the Music is moving *irretrievably onward*. Not only should each situation be self-explaining as an entity, but the order or succession of the situations, or the actual dramatic action, should be self-explaining also. Just as each chord in a musical phrase may be pleasing by the (vertical) relations of its notes, while, at the same time, the order of succession of the chords may be pleasing.

## 3. ACTION (DRAMATIC DEVELOPMENT).

(4) demands that the plot shall differ from those displayed by novels and dramas which propose to imitate contemporary life. The various ways in which it should differ are displayed under the heads *B*, *C*, *D*, below.

*B* The subject-matter of the plot should be beautiful in the sense of displaying nobler, loftier, and grander conflicts, rather than those which are repulsive or frivolous. Just as Architecture makes its loftier flights in grand temples and impressive cathedrals, and as Sculpture as a high art avoids mere *genre* subjects, so the Music-Drama should enthusiastically strive to realise the ideal of a 'high' Art, especially as it has the lofty element, Music, to guide it. (Lofty does not necessarily mean subtly complicated.) It does not need to be harrowing: it aims at quite a different æsthetic effect.

*C I* The plot should not be complicated, for the mind must not be unduly distracted from its occupation of listening to and enjoying the music. The plot should not be such a one, for instance, as that displayed in a modern 'novel,' in which the absence of Music and the length of the work allow a complete exposition of the plot in all its intricate detail.

*C I* The Music-Drama, unlike the 'novel' and spoken Drama, is unfitted for the presentation of a plot founded on confusion, intrigue, misunderstandings, etc. This Style of entangled plot is out of place in the Music-Drama, because it is too complicated to explain itself easily and because it appeals to the intellect and not directly to the emotions. Like plots founded on abstruse, moral and religious ideas, it calls for too much mental exercise on the part of the hearer. They compel too much weighing of facts—too many acts of judgment of past occurrences to compare with present scenes. Such a plot as that of *Othello* requires a power of definite expression, like speech, to unfold the subtle workings of an 'Iago.' The intricacies of court intrigue are totally outside the field of musical presentation. Any plot founded on subtle political affairs is wholly unfitted to musical presentation (cf. p. 61).

As a rule, modern Melodramas directly cultivate subtlety of development, and newspapers sometimes offer prizes for a solution of the dramatic *plexus* of a serial story, of which the author's last chapter is withheld, thereby intensifying the enigmatic and brain-racking entanglement of fate. This is related to Literature about as a puzzle-column is, and, as an art-expedient, deserves to rank about as high as the financial expedient of devising sensational titles for novels—'Her Fatal Failing' by the author of 'His Hypnotic Homage,' etc. Such harrowing up of the soul is proscribed by *B*.

*C I* As for the Music-Drama, it should be as simple in its action as

possible, consistent with dramatic interest, in order that it may explain itself through the eye without taxing the intellect and thereby distracting the attention of the listener from the Music, which must be enjoyed as it is being played.

For a like reason, the action should present a severe *dramatic unity*. This is especially necessary, for the function of the action is to render the phases of pathos presented by the Music clear (recognisable) (p. 4); hence the exclusion of extraneous moments and irrelevant 'episode' is most necessary. The mind must not be confronted by puzzling features, having no relation to the progressive course of the action and distracting attention from the Music. C 2

As dramatic unity is very often associated with subtlety and complexity of development (proscribed by C 1), it may be advisable to discuss it somewhat.

Severity of dramatic development is not identical with depth or complication of development. The dramatic threads may be few and simple, and the Drama still display *unity*. Unity is a means of making the Drama susceptible of easy comprehension by the spectator, thereby aiding the dramatic effect. If severity of dramatic development necessarily meant extension and complication, 'unity' would have no place among the canons of the Music-Drama (cf. p. 42). C 2

Nor is extreme *fulness* of development identical with *severity* of dramatic development. On page 42 it was hinted that, perhaps one of the ways in which the Music-Drama text will—and ought to—distinguish itself from the spoken Drama, is in *length* of the development.

In tracing the way in which the *Ring* arose (developed from an original plan for a *single* part) and remembering that the patriotic idea probably influenced the treatment of the mythic Materials (the performance of 1876 was spoken of by some as a display of *national Art*) we might be prepared to admit that the *Ring* is not to be considered in respect to its *length* as the *norm* of the Music-Drama in general. Just how such a fullness of development as that displayed by the *Meistersinger* text is to be avoided without sacrificing the dramatic effect or seeking recourse in a literary prologue or programme is a serious question. Any one who has grasped the enormous technical difficulties of a high-class performance of one of Wagner's later works with special reference to the difficulties of *singing* and *acting* (including memorising of the parts) will be inclined to inquire whether this extreme length is necessary, whether it is expedient, and whether it is peculiar to the Music-Drama Style as distinguished from the legitimately complicated and lengthy dramatic actions of Drama as an independent Art (spoken Drama).

Fancy Wagner's Trilogy, *The Ring*, without its introduction, *Rhinegold*, viz. compelled to reveal the contents of *Rhinegold* in narratives introduced into the other parts, and you have an exaggerated example of what occurs in some of the works. Undoubtedly Wagner was a master at this concentration of explanations in narrative form. (Cf. *Tristan*, opening scene.) But would it have been needed had his Dramas been less extensive and complicated? Would it not often be better in *acted* form, or entirely relegated to a sort of compulsory 'prologue,' either spoken or printed, whereby the spectator could be definitely informed of preceding events without recourse to the narrative which interrupts the action and is so opposed to the presentative character of Music? C 1  
&  
D

The *Ring*, for instance, in spite of the extensiveness of the part actually acted, includes

materials in 'narrative form' which would serve for several 'interlegomena,' notably between *Rhinegold*, *Walküre*, and *Siegfried*. This point is not a mere discussion of the unities of 'time' and 'place' and 'action,' although these probably apply far more to the Music-Drama than to independent Drama. It is a very important matter in reference to the future of the Style of the Music-Drama. It is conceivable that there might be less of the prospective and retrospective element about it than is displayed by the *Ring*. This feature centres particularly around Wotan, whose "plans" the average auditor would do well to make himself acquainted with before seeing the work—especially for the part *Siegfried*.

It is often very difficult to criticise Wagner's works, on account of their musical power and beauty, which redeem certain parts not absolutely conformable to the theoretical Style. Thus, the scene in *Siegfried*, in which Mime puts the three questions to Wotan, is perhaps not entirely indispensable to the dramatic action (was Wagner influenced by the *myth* here?), which should be presentative, not retrospective. But the beauty of the music in parts of this scene of great contrasts very greatly prejudices us in its favour. We should not forget that Wagner might have written just as beautiful music to a scene less episodic and 'un-presentative.' So also the scene of the 'Nornen' in *Götterdämmerung*, of which the vocal part is quite remarkable. Planning and plotting situations (cf. *Götterdämmerung*, i. 1, and character of Hagen in general) ought to be reduced to a minimum. All such features may be necessary to the complete dramatic action; the point is—are they not inconsistent with the Style of the Music-Drama, which must differ from that of the spoken Drama.

*C 2* The dramatic development in Wagner's later works is remarkably close-knit, and may be supposed for that reason to be wonderfully clear. But perhaps this very perspicuity is sometimes dearly paid for in narrative detail that is liable to be unlyrical. A point might be raised just here—that since the outer aspects were to be unlike those of everyday life, that the dramatic development also might be unlike that of the independent Drama in being less detailed in its severity. But it is Canons *C 2* and *D* that prescribe a dramatic development and the exclusion of episode. Wagner's tendencies were towards severe dramatic development, and it is conceivable that the prevalence of 'narrative' in the Trilogy may be attributable to this in that it was hardly possible to directly *present* the whole action. On the other side, however, it may be said that some things are better narrated than performed. But should such features enter into the Music-Drama? Moreover, the narrative is troublesome for Music-Drama, because it proposes a situation that is not particularly lyrical. 'Narrative,' both as an idea and as a reality, suggests *speech* and not musical dialogue such as the Music-Drama necessitates. Further, Music is venturing slightly out of its field in attempting to exercise subtle *descriptive* powers. Those relations which are simplest to comprehend at a glance and are most lyrical in the sense of *impelling* to musical expression, are those of direct discourse and feeling—the *I* addressing the *you* under stress of emotion.

When we are relating outside occurrences, we are no longer active factors spontaneously expressing what our emotions toward the other person present impel us to express. It is conceivable that since so much in the Music-Drama depends upon perspicuity, that therefore as much as possible should be clearly enacted before our eyes, instead of being consigned to the less vigorous and more intellectual means of the 'narrative.' It might be asserted that a vivid *epical* treatment would do just as well. However beautiful and simple a calm and simple fluent succession of events might be, it would probably lack that *emotional* element which music calls for (*D*) and might tend to mislead i.e. distract (*C*). But there may also be severity of dramatic development *without* narrative. It seems probable that the epic fairy tale is not quite so well fitted to the Style as the more severe Drama.

*B* The Style which is wanted is not the exciting melodramatic Style, but a Style which will impress us as *beautiful*. Hence the Drama must sacrifice itself to the musical and pictorial element, in so far as this does not lead to inconsistencies and incongruities.

A highly idealistic Style of Drama does not affect us as strongly as naturalistic Drama. Its justification is, that it is more beautiful—it displays a conscious predilection for beautiful and lofty ideas. Where Music can assist Drama, is where it accompanies a poetic diction which is too exalted to appear natural by itself, the Music renders it still more unnatural—renders it *purely ideal*—and thus *effectively removes the diction from the adverse judgment that it “sounds overstrained,”* and so ends in making it ‘natural.’

Thus Music can make an unnatural diction *natural* (viz. vivid), by elevating it into a sphere in which it is natural, by saving it from the injurious criticism which comes from its not being sufficiently removed from comparison with the aspects of real life.

Wagner was first dramatist, and then became musician. It was almost necessary for the severity of his reforms, that his dramatic spirit preceded his musical accomplishment, otherwise he might only have carried out his reforms in a half-way fashion. But it is not necessary that those who now take advantage of his admirable reforms should bind themselves to a part which, while it was necessary to *reform*, may not be necessary to the art *per se*. Wagner not only attempted a Music-Drama, but also a *deep* Drama in addition. His dramatic plots would not be lacking in depth and completeness and severity if transposed as absolute Dramas. We may be thankful that Wagner gave us Dramas so deep as *Parsifal*, and that he gave a myth as grand a development as that of the *Ring of the Nibelungen*. But that the Music-Drama Style absolutely requires such a dramatic depth and fulness of treatment is not proved thereby. Some real artist in the future may find that he can dispense with such depth and fulness of the dramatic element, and yet produce works which will not be wanting in highest Beauty. It must be remembered that Wagner’s works have an æsthetical ‘face-value’ which makes them art-works whether the audience grasp any of the deep symbolism of commentators or not.

This requires that Music and action should agree, and will be dealt with under the head of *Music*.

The action should be emotional in the sense of portraying acts committed under the impulse of emotions, and not at the instigation of reason. The ‘motives’ which impel the characters to their fatal acts, should be those arising from ‘feeling’ and not from ‘reason.’

The conclusion then is that the action should be dramatic and not epical, but that it should necessitate a minimum of narrative (*D*), and should not be so deep and subtle in its nature or development as to monopolise the attention of the hearer (*C 1, C 2*). Moreover, it can be dramatic without being sensationally so. It may be thoroughly and severely emotional without necessarily arousing the emotions of the audience.

Here again we recognise the principle of the conservation of mental energies. A *real* emotion such as anger experienced by the audience would draught away mental energy from the enjoyment of the Music-Drama itself (*C 3*).

This is an odd point about the Music-Drama—that it demands at one and the same time an *inner* Drama and an *outer* Drama, and the two seem inconsistent. Not necessarily so, however.

C 3

B

C 2

C 3

D

B, D,  
&  
E

We probably get the idea from the distinct separation which is marked on the modern stage by the two species of Drama—the sensational melodrama depending *purely* upon objective incidents, and wallowing in sought-for and far-fetched scenic effects: the other the ‘conversation play,’ during the course of which nothing takes place, except the lingual expression of inner emotions and their development. A little thought will show that the two can go along together, viz. that the *inner* Drama may be such a one as *requires, demands*, an outer Drama. This is the *desideratum* of the Music-Drama. It must be severely ‘motivirt,’ ‘motivated,’ and yet it should not degenerate into an unpictorial conversation piece or a psychological study. (Cf. modern novels.) This is part and parcel of the difficulty of finding a mean between a purely pictorial conception (*B*), and a purely dramatic action (*D*).

Subjectivism. Subjective has three or four meanings—it is contrasted with ‘outer,’ when it means *psychic* or inner; with common or unhuman, or inorganic, or material, when it means *personal*; with rational or intellectual, and perceptual, when it means strongly emotional; with melodramatic or ‘sensational,’ when it means emotional in an inner web of emotions, displaying dramatic unity, viz. not capricious or requiring *deus ex machina*; and with distinctively modern sentiments, when it means ‘pure human,’ or primitive, or not local in space or time, but belonging broadly to all human beings alike.

Wagner’s “*Subjectivity*.”—Wagner’s Dramas are principally concerned with the relations of *man to man*, the simpler relations, not those born of the complex arrangements of modern or of ‘court’ society. The scenic changes are few, the dramatic action is confined to the heart, and does not display any great *outward* occurrences. The *melodramatic occurrences* are rare in Wagner; they are replaced by ‘inner’ or emotional occurrences. The subjective character is the more marked in Wagner’s poems by reason of their *dramatic* form in which man deals in direct discourse with man, not descriptive as in Walter Scott’s *Marmion*. The gods of Wagner’s Dramas regarded as ‘personifications’ of *ideas*, are adapted for fulfilling dramatic purposes. Fricka as the embodiment of a sentiment of *morality* is a dramatic figure which can appeal to a mind where the *idea* of “morality” might be incomprehensible. The artist renders ideas dramatically effective by making them *concrete* in the *person* of some god.

So the ‘Sword’ and ‘Spear’ and ‘Ring’ in Wagner are *concrete* representatives of ideas or qualities. The figures of speech of Wagner are subjective as contrasted with the *objective* comparisons of the (pseudo) ‘classical’ poets, Pope, Dryden. Virgil employs the *simile*, Wagner *personifies*.

Even a descriptive piece like the ‘narrative’ of Tannhäuser reflects feeling in the midst of the (narrative) spectacular features.

The “subjectivity” of Wagner’s Dramas (most of the text is expressive of *psychical* *states*) is a part of the dramatic “Style” which is necessitated by the Music element. The *Unity* which gives the “Style” to the representations requires that the words should relate to the emotions which the *Music* represents. The text is “psychical” in order to agree with the Music which is representative of the psychical side of Drama.

The love scene of *Tristan and Isolde* gives a good idea of what is meant by the expression “Rein-menschliche,” for it represents as far as is possible to the eye and ear the region of the mind—experiences which monopolise consciousness in the two lovers. They feel an emotion so intense that it occupies all their attention and hence excludes

the sensations and thoughts of the world about them. In the sense that the world of the 'Seen' vanishes when the *eyes* are closed, so when the mind's eye (attention or consciousness to external stimuli) is *closed* to all impressions except that of *human* sensations, and occupied solely by its own peculiar *emotions*, it may be said that the 'world' has vanished (or that the lovers have been 'freed' from the world). The psychological consideration of this wonderful scene might lead to the conclusion that the ecstatic expressions of the two lovers were expressive of more 'truth' than was credited to emotional interjections. They really live in another world. The darkness of the night has made the 'seen' world vanish, one might say that 'half' the world had already perished when no more sensations from the eye were received, for when we *fancy* the "world" we represent our *sight impressions* of it, so important is the *eye* in our intercourse with the objective world. We think of the world in terms of its appearance, i.e. eye-impressions. Blot out the world of 'appearances' and people are very much alike as regards what remains.

In sound sleep we are rid of the *whole world*, but in the scene above, the minds are not in a *negative* condition, it is a positive condition, but a world which is purely *human* in the sense that it is confined to human beings, is personal, is 'inner,' has no adequate outward cause, and unlike 'outer' phenomena, *emotional*.

The "rein-menschliche" is that part of the psychical 'life' or 'world' which is purely subjective, which is not wholly 'caused' by some exterior object. The contrast between this world of human emotion and the cold objective world is made more striking in *Tristan and Isolde*, by connecting their *happiness* with the *first*, and their *pain* with the *second* world; as long as they are lost in each other they are happy, but as the day dawns, their minds being no longer absorbed by sensation, emotion, and feeling only, the light *thrusts* sensations of the *outside world* upon their consciousness; this is sufficient in itself to disturb their emotional delight, but the light is the harbinger of *another* 'world' which is far more noisome than that of sight alone; this is the world of *remembered* ideas—the memories of "relations,"—of human conditions—of laws which interfere with their individual freedom—visions of suffering. This world of human pain and suffering all rises in their minds with the rising of the sun, and their purely emotional world is at an end. The unfeeling or thinking world now thrusts itself before their eyes and rudely dethrones the soft and lovely states of consciousness of "*their*" world. With the compulsory consciousness of the outside world and its relations comes the sense of the inconsistency between the two, the freedom in which they bathed, forgetful of the world, and the bondage which the world brings with force. There is a painful sense that the one world is not true to the other, that there is a deep discrepancy between the two, and that this will meet with its punishment. The world of personal *conscience* is now absorbing their minds—and the sun has truly risen on the *real* world, the world of heaven and hell, both inhabited in one day.

Considering the foregoing from an objective standpoint, the 'world' of an individual's mind is seen to be the sum of the states of consciousness at *any one* time, whatever may be the *possible* states of consciousness *under other conditions*, such as those of illumination.

We may feel that if a scene were illuminated we should be conscious of such and such sensations; but our world is that which we are conscious of, not that which we might be conscious of under other circumstances. Of course the *objective* world does not cease to be capable of exciting sensations in our minds, when it *ceases* to *excite* any sensations, but our 'world' at any one moment is largely a matter of direction of attention, just as the actual world is largely coloured by our ideas and conscience, moral and religious sentiments.

A strong emotion *compels* attention, it monopolises consciousness and we are usually more or less conscious of the existence of the exterior world at all times of the day, but there are certain sensations and emotions which are *so intense* that they completely monopolise the consciousness, and hence the world does actually cease to exist *for us*. In other words, 'the world' regarded as the flowing stream of consciousness is continually varying in width, and sometimes is narrowed down to a single intense strand of monopolising emotion. This is something very different from the ever-changing and highly heterogeneous stream of sensations, images, ideas, etc., that mercilessly pelt the sensorium in the

wide-awake battle of modern life. Moreover, it is conceivable that, taking the whole world of human beings, it is the *day* impressions that differ most largely; it is as if the rising sun illumined all those outer surroundings which differ so throughout the world, climatic and social. It is by the light of the sun that the hovel differs from the palace.

*D* It should be marked by its removal from the ratiocinating nature of our everyday life, viz. it should be unlike the progress of dramas which arise, not from impulses of the emotions of the characters, but as the result of cold reasoning on their part. Many occurrences in modern life are highly dramatic—such as the ruin of a speculator on the stock market—and such occurrences are often taken as the basis of modern ‘naturalistic’ plays, but they are unfitted to the nature of Music, for reasoning, rather than emotions, forms the basis of their development.

The Novel is specially fitted to portray such dramas, since the whole mind of each character is laid bare to the reader, and the magnitude of the work allows a subtle display of the acts of volition as influenced by the reasoning powers. The emotional nature of Music prescribes an action woven with a web of emotions. The subtle, thoughtful, and self-controlled character of an Iago is far better fitted to the Literary Drama, where speech is untrammelled by simple, sensuous Music. The plot of the Music-Drama, then, should be founded upon individuals impelled by emotions at every step of the development, rather than by logic.

*C 1* Moreover, the emotions at stake should not be of a subtle nature depending upon intellect.

*E* The emotions should be such as call for (impel to) *expression*. The action should be one in which there is scope for acting—it should be eventful, and not quiet and lacking in adventure; it should *call for action*, and thus give opportunity for that *expression* of the emotions which is the *raison d'être* of the Stage in the Music-Drama. (Note that, by *B*, these actions need not be always bloodthirsty, or strained. *Repose* is also a feature to be considered. Cf. 8, *Acting*.)

*B*  
*C 3*

If the pathos of the Music is to be recognisably indicated by the Stage, then the action must not be devoid of acts—of gestures, etc. The action should call for gestures, and for those larger gestures, acts expressing some more or less uncontrollable emotion in the personages.

The style of action should be such that the reminiscent element is replaced by *present* feeling and action, viz. the dialogue should relate to the *present* feelings of the characters.

It is a great disadvantage for a Music-Drama to be compelled to ‘relate’ a part of itself, instead of being ‘acted’ out as a whole. Vocal dialogue cuts such an unnatural figure when it proposes to enlighten the audience about past events, and to summarise the *status quo* of the dramatic action.

Of course, it is very difficult to begin, develope, and end an action which shall be really of ‘absorbing’ interest in the four hours or so



allowed for a performance. Moreover, the clever expedient of 'introductory domestics' whose duty it is to disclose to the audience the present state of affairs, is hardly applicable to the Music-Drama. The clearest and most sensuous kind of action is one which is *complete* in itself—which allows itself to be entirely 'acted' in the time allowed. Vocal dialogue becomes more or less unnatural when not the excited expression of present emotions. The sensuous nature of Music necessitates immediate enjoyment on the part of the hearer—it allows no postponement; hence, it condemns all 'distracting mental activity, and hence condemns remarks about absent affairs which require mental activity for their understanding. Each situation should be complete in itself, not requiring particular explanations from the participants. We have marked the whole apparatus of the Stage as a determinant of the emotion which the singer expresses; hence Stage and emotion should agree at every moment. This they do not perfectly do, if the *present* emotions require a *past* situation for their explanation. The ideal arrangement is where what we *see* is a part of the expression of those emotions which the actors are inwardly *feeling* and *vocally* expressing. Here only does the Stage do for the Music what it should—that is, act as the determinant of the phase of pathos expressed by the vocal Music. We have called in the Stage as a picture to make the recognition of the pathos of the Music unmistakably clear. If the Stage does not do that, it does not do what it has been called to do, and the Music could as well explain itself without the Stage. The 'situation' which we see before us on the Stage should set the key-note of the pathos which the singer is expressing in Music. This is the ideal, and the actual action should approach it as nearly as possible.

There is great opportunity here for the dramatist to display his fancy in weaving the threads of his action so that no part need be reminiscent—so that no character may be compelled to lay aside his part of participant in the Drama, and turn narrator in order to inform the audience how things stand.

It should be a dramatic action rather than idyllic, for it must *call for*, must demand that vocal expression which is to form a part of the Art—the *link*. See list of *plus* (+) Emotions, part 5, *E*.

It is very difficult to speak dogmatically on the subject of 'action,' inner and outer. For instance, the norm is where there is a severe inner action and a very complete *outer* action corresponding to it. But notice that two further degrees in the admixture of the ingredients outer action and inner feeling are possible—in one the outer action might preponderate, in which case the eye would be more interested, and the action thereby clearer to the mind through the eye; in the other case the inner Drama is given freer play, and the musical expression thereof, as in *Tristan and Isolde*.

Now it is just conceivable that two subjects might spontaneously give rise to these two different blends, and both might be pleasing, each in *its*

*E**C 1*

*own way*—one pleasing the dramatic feelings better, the other the musical ear, and minds inclined to the inner feelings and the musical expression. Both would display a *Style* as well as the 'normal' blend, and it is possible that this will long lend a variety to the various Music-Dramas which may subsequently be composed. This may serve to explain a little fact regarding Wagner's works.

An admirer of Wagner's works often likes *all* of them, and when asked which he likes *best* will evade the question by answering that he likes different works for *different reasons*, perhaps adding that he likes *Parsifal* for its loftiness and moral depth and its choral music; *Tristan* for the intensity of the dramatic expression and the corresponding intensity of musical expression, and the *lyrical character* of some of the situations; *Rhinegold* for its splendid scenic effects, and for the removal of the scenes from suggestions of everyday life; *Tannhäuser* for its grand dramatic theme or underlying idea, and the number of situations that spontaneously call for Music; *Lohengrin* for its simple musical beauty, etc., etc.

A person who has a keen desire to see *action*, and has hardly the musical liking sufficiently to make him enjoy such 'lengths' as the love scene in the second act of *Tristan*, will be unable to find a recompense in the intensity of emotional expression of the mixing nor its spontaneous rushing flow, but will be troubled that 'nothing happens.' (Does anything "happen" in a 'ballad concert' of three hours' duration? Does a concert disturb us because "nothing happens"?) We see how difficult it would be to please every mind with exactly the same *Style*; we see the *reason* why some critics take *Tristan and Isolde* to task for its lack of action and of chorus, and others condemn parts of *Parsifal* and the *The Ring* for their display of *outer* beauty, viz. spectacular beauty.

B There is a very great difference between "lengths." Some may be  
 & those musical extensions of lyrical situations, but it is also possible to  
 D worry an audience by 'lengths' that are not lyrical, as those which merely  
 narrate events necessary to the understanding of the action, the narrator  
 not expressing his own strongly-felt emotions. Such situations, if very  
 extended, often display their unmusical (unlyrical) character by the very  
 kind of music that accompanies them; it is often suggestive neither of  
 pure musical beauty nor of emotional Music, and examples are not wanting  
 in Wagner's works of portions of the Music suggesting that the situation  
 did not enthuse the composer himself. They suggest a lack of emotional  
 spontaneity as compared with other parts, and sometimes suggest Music  
 that was the product rather of artifice than feeling.

One would fancy that it would be somewhat of a relief to the overwhelmed senses of the spectators to sink to the less complex enjoyment of Music solely. No 'intense desire of dramatic progress' seems to have troubled the enthusiasts of Italian opera, where the action was taken little notice of either by the composer or by the audience. Personally, I believe,

that a great deal of the distaste at Wagner's 'lengths' would not have arisen had people been used to his musical Style, and *had the music been adequately rendered*. No wonder that people sometimes assert that they like Wagner's music when they hear it rendered in *Concerts*, but find it less satisfactory when rendered in the opera-house. If the conditions of the latter be taken into consideration, it is quite possible to explain the abominable mixture that has sometimes been served up to us under the name of Wagner.

It is one thing to display scenes that do not further the action, but yet are lyrical stations, and another to display scenes that neither further the action nor display a lyrical situation and beauty, viz. without any musical recompense for the dramatic hesitation. It is probable that the first kind when *natural*, is a justifiable procedure in the Style of the Music-Drama as distinguished from that of the spoken Drama. If mere explanation of the situation could be conveyed to the audience by some other means than the narrative dialogue, much that is inconsistent with the Style of the Music-Drama (*D, E, C 1, C 2*) would be avoided. Thus the opening scene of *Parsifal*, especially the explanations of Gurnemanz, although on the whole necessary as *information*, would be improved perhaps, if conveyed by some other means, or rather, perhaps, what a pity the action is such a one as to necessitate the narrative.

Whether chorus-situation can enter into Music-Drama depends upon the way it is compiled. If we make the action very complicated, and give a very important narrative for the understanding of it to the chorus, we can hardly complain if in this case the chorus interrupts and distracts the attention from the *action*. But if the Drama is *simple* (*C 1*) and emotional, instead of intrigue and rational elements (*D*), and if the situation calls for a *general feeling* of a simple nature and remains homogeneous for a time, then the situation is lyrical to the extent of being *choral* even. Here we see again that whether a practice which is reprehensible in the Opera is reprehensible in the Music-Drama, depends upon the way in which the *dramatic* part is handled. Cf. *Götterdämmerung*, Chorus of *Mannen*. If the action and situation be highly idealistic (*A* and *B*), what a crowd of people do in everyday life has *nothing* to do with the matter.

To resume then, the action will be one woven of simple but serious emotional threads of a highly æsthetic quality, and not 'intellectual.' Predominantly *noble* (sublime)—the development should be severe, but not complicated or subtle, and the whole should be conceived in a pictorial spirit and a sculpturesque spirit as opposed to sensationalism in Drama. The emotions should be those which impel to expression. There should be a minimum of narrated reminiscent details.

## 4. STYLE OF CHARACTERS.

That the Music-Drama should require a particular type of human 'character' seems strange, and yet the presence of Music necessitates it.

*A* The 'characters' will differ from persons in real life in several respects. This can be more clearly displayed under the special heads (*B*), (*C*), etc.

*B* The hero, or ideal man, may be drawn much more beautiful than any actual man. The artist may deliberately exclude the ugly and ignoble from a particular character, and paint him pre-eminently grand and beautiful as compared with the mixed and faulty character of a real man. Such a grand character can be raised far above anything we are familiar with in our ordinary life, or would endure in a Drama, which proposed or pretended to accurately imitate that life. The Music succeeds in making what is a purely fanciful product seem real and vivid. So great is the power of Music.

That an action is 'ideal' does not militate against the possibility that the characters are real, although it requires a little thought in order to grasp the co-existence of 'real' and 'ideal' in a work which must be 'idealistic' in Style. A Chinaman is 'real,' although he may wear a costume very unlike that which we are accustomed to. A citizen of ancient Athens was 'real,' although costume and Architecture were very different then from what *we* are obliged to look at from day to day. Apply the idea to the Music-Drama; the *emotions* of the characters are 'real' (like our own emotions), however much their appearance and that of their surroundings may differ from the outward aspects of *our* ordinary life. They experience like emotions to those which we experience under like conditions, although their costumes, mode of expression (diction), and environment differ from ours. A character may be vividly and emotionally *real*, and yet not a modern character in *other respects*.

It seems a little unfortunate that Wagner, although he handled some of the loftiest dramatic themes, did not leave behind him any truly *god-like* characters. One can only imagine what a glorified image of a god might have been as exalted by Wagner's Music at its highest. The character of Wotan at times is extremely grand as regards the musical treatment, but morally he seems far below a possible ideal. Certain of his acts are highly reprehensible, and not consistent with the dignity we assign to the highest ideal. Of course he suffers more for his misdoings than Greek deities seem to at times, but this by no means constitutes a conception of pure godliness. However, such was probably not what Wagner as dramatist required. Wotan cannot be said to be the All-powerful, for he is singularly bound, and deceit seems to be anything but offensive to him; he would almost be able to hold his place in the Greek hierarchy, especially if aided by Loge.

*C1* (*C1*) calls for great simplicity in the character of the characters: it condemns those complicated types and problematical characters which are

quite proper to the exhaustive treatment of the 'Novel.' They should be few and sharply defined. They should be *condensed* from all the *possible* characters *which might* enter in the piece, viz. numerically the active 'personal' should not be as high as might be allowable for a spoken play.

The dramatist cannot, like the novelist, stop and deliver a lecture on the anatomy of the minds of his characters at every step. He cannot whisper to his reader between each remark of his characters; hence he is dependent upon the *divining* power of the spectator's mind (cf. Drama and Music, p. 22), and, therefore, his characters must be less *subtle*, more severely consistent—since their emotions under the various conditions (situations) must be supplied by the audience. What is most adapted to the Music-Drama are characters marked by selective traits. Such characters might be highly unfitted for everyday life (struggle for existence), and their depiction in novel-form might justify censure.

(C2) calls for consistency of character, and for homogeneity in the character of each 'person.' A spoken drama may take account of a *change* in a man's character, and a novel is admirably adapted to this end by reason of 'its definite means of expression,' the time it may take in relating the whole action and also by virtue of the *side* descriptions—the glances at the man's inner nature which are given as *part* of the author's omniscience of all that is taking place at any time, and in any place in the minds even of his characters. As contrasted with the Novel, stands the 'Opera' in which any subtleties of change of character are thoroughly out of place, just as any intricate social relations are out of place. In *Rienzi* we have a great social tragedy which can only be displayed in all its force in a history of the "Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire." It is as a part of a great *national drama* that *Rienzi* can be fully appreciated, and that drama found its proper *form* of expression by the artist *Gibbon* in his "Decline and Fall, etc." in six vols. This is the Art proper to a drama of a *nation* or of nations. C 2

But the *romantic* Style proper to Music is unfit for such a deep plot as that of the historical figure of *Rienzi*; the historical Drama is unsuited to *Music*.

Historical plots are not only incongruous with *modern* Music in the matter of situation, but the *sentiments* which are concerned in historical plots are *not* lyrical. Does not every one feel that the historical plot is more suited to the 'spoken' Drama? (Cf. *Rienzi*.) Even in this work (*Rienzi*), which was composed with little heed of purely artistic ends, Wagner found the right equation—the *grandiose* Style of Music—the use of trumpet *fanfares*, etc.

From the show and brilliancy of Wagner's *Rienzi* to the purely domestic setting and inner action of the *Fliegende Holländer* is a step which one may well wonder at. That a musician could find the right equation of Music for two subjects so completely different is surprising, but more so is the change of subject-matter.

In a three-hour performance too much subtlety of character is oppressive when we consider the number of musical tones which call for the

attention of the spectator. The mind cannot enjoy Music if it is to be distracted by subtlety of character.

*D* Moreover, subtlety of character is somewhat synonymous with intellect, and that the character should be *emotional* and unrestrained is prescribed by the nature of Music.

*C 2* It will be noticed that this character fitted to the Music-Drama differs from real persons in not having an all-round character—in being one-sided—each represents a selective side of human character, exaggerated in its particular traits. This is an advantage in two ways. From the

*C 1* absence of conflicting traits we are prepared for whatever acts the character will perpetrate—the *unity* of his character precluding any *ambiguity* in his actions—and the exaggeration of his traits will serve to distinguish him more sharply from the *other* characters with whom he deals. Hence he will appear sharply defined to our eyes, and will be clearly understood without much effort on the part of the spectator. Distinctiveness and self-consistency are the desiderata. Cf. the admirable way in which Wagner's personæ stand out from one another.

*(C 3, C 3a, C 4, and D)* all require that the Style of the vocal expression and the instrumental Music accompanying each character shall *agree* with that character, viz. shall aid us in comprehending his character—shall not belie it at every turn, but aid us in distinguishing it from that

*C 2* of the other characters.

In this art of musically depicting character Wagner is pre-eminent. Even in such an early work as *Tannhäuser* the characters of Wolfram, Tannhäuser, and the Landgraf are surprisingly reflected on the Music. Repeated hearings of Wagner's works will surprise one at what can be done in this respect of *musical* individualisation, especially when we reflect that the Music is continually altering to express different *emotions*. Moreover, his characters stand out wonderfully clear as regards their musical depiction. This was one of the weakest features of the 'Opera.'

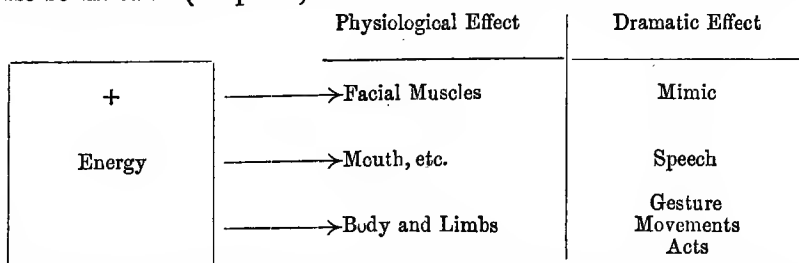
*C 5* Costume as an aid to distinguishing the characters (see part 10).

*D* Social intercourse in modern life seems to sanction the repression of expression of emotions, indeed *nil admirari* almost expresses a certain phase of culture. (Cf. Costumes, above.) Moreover, the increasing predominance of the intellect in the regulation of worldly affairs seems to be threatening the emotions themselves with complete extermination. It is true, perhaps, that business affairs are much better directed by the intellect than by the emotions, and it may also be expedient for the end of social intercourse to suppress all expression of our natural emotions; however, for the purpose of the Music-Drama, a type of character is required that assaults the commercial and social code of conduct at every turn. We have seen that to render the pathos of the Music recognisable the 'Stage' has been called into requisition; for the 'Stage' is a vast assemblage of *means of expression*. Hence the Stage will be rendering its best service to the Music, when it has become most 'expressive'—that is, when the

*E*

characters are not the thoughtful and reserved type, but excitable and unrestrained. The cool and reserved character of a gambler may be dramatic in a certain sense, but the character of Siegfried in Wagner's work is the type which is fitted to the Music-Drama. The nature of Music requires not only an emotional character, but also a character given to the expression of its feelings in words and gestures, to render the Music comprehensible. Independent Drama can afford to be much less particular in its choice of characters, because it has no Music to elucidate or to ruin, and it has the full use of the most definite means of expression—Speech. We have here another reason why the Music-Drama cannot utilise a plot imitated from contemporary life—the presence of Music precludes the type of man most important in modern life, the cool and reserved *thinker*, and further precludes the employment of complete and subtle speech—that pre-eminent mode of expression of modern life and art.

The style of character dictated by the 'emotional' qualities of Music is the impulsive character, not the self-contained and reasoning type of man. The energy of his emotions should not dissipate itself in reasoning processes, but spontaneously discharge itself towards the 'outer man' in expression, viz. song, gesture, acts. We can judge of the nature of an inner emotion by its outward effects only. It must not be supposed that a character cannot be 'real' because the outer appearance of the person is unlike that of persons in contemporary life. In his 'inner' and physical side, he is the very counterpart of ourselves. Fashions in dress change rapidly, but the heart of man does not alter at the same rate. The point in which the characters of the Music-Drama are saved from being 'antique' and entirely uninteresting is that their emotional nature is pictured like ours, although their outer appearance is different. We are face to face with a fellow being, although his costume may suggest ancient Greece rather than modern Paris. Were this association of ideality in costume with reality in soul impossible, the Music-Drama, as we have pictured it, would be impossible. The 'inner' side of the Stage is real, though its outer side must be unreal. (Cf. p. 14.)



This diagram may serve to give one a better idea of the mechanics or physiology of a character under dramatic circumstances, and the directions of discharge of nervous energy under stress of a difference of potential between the nervous centre and the outlying neural ramifications. Cf. indefinite and definite roads of neural discharge. H. Spencer, *Physiology of Laughter*. Darwin, *The Expression of the Emotions*.

## 5. EMOTIONS.

From this is an easy step to the consideration of those emotions most fitted for depiction in the Music-Drama. They are those natural to such a character as has just been defined. They are those which are most intense and most beautiful, least subtle, and which *compel expression*, viz. impel the character to *vocal utterance*, to gesture, and to *acts*, and further to *lyric expression*.

Having seen that the nature of Music requires the action to be founded upon the impulses of *emotions* and not reasoning, we have now to see whether some emotions are not more fitted than others for the Music-Drama.

*A* See also *B*, *C* 1, *C* 2, *C* 3, *C* 3a, *C* 4, *D* and *E* for the detailed *modes* of difference. It is sufficient to remark here as part of all covered by *A* that no *distinctively* modern emotions or sentiments should enter into the poetical treatment. Political party feelings are entirely unfitted for several reasons.

In general, the emotions entering into the dramatic representation should differ from distinctively modern feelings and sentiments in being *pure human* feelings. It is difficult to explain exactly what this means. It is itself a matter of 'feeling' almost. One might get an idea of it from the subject of '*Manners*' in Drama. Pure human emotions would then mean those that displayed no local colouring in time or space—that were not sharply localised or racially monopolised—those that required no historical background for their appreciation—those not associated with caste systems or cliques. This almost implies that they will not be strictly modern feelings, and those emotions which are not localised *are* predominantly those most primitive and deep emotions—those that we in common with other peoples inherit.

The omission of purely modern emotions is in deference to the *suggestions* of such emotions of the outer *aspects* of our everyday life which (*A*) inveighs against.

In this *necessarily* ideal (i.e. psychic) part of his heroes, Wagner does not make them antique. He depicts their *inner* life as real and modern as our own feelings, but he avoids any feelings that would be *felt to be* distinctively modern. Of course, while the terms 'primitive' and 'pure-human' and 'universal' have a pretty definite meaning when applied to art-works, they all savour somewhat of J. J. Rousseau's naïve conception of 'primitive.' The 'Golden Age' will long be a cherished conception of mankind, in spite of scientific facts and probabilities. We also cherish a conception of ancient Greece that is probably tinged with Poetry. We should, perhaps, be somewhat disappointed if we could experience for a day the emotions which a savage experiences. However, from the scientific standpoint, it is probable that mankind differ less in their feelings than in their ideas and theories, and that this holds for Time as well as for Space. The human heart has been



clothed in many costumes. By 'primitive' the artist very likely means the 'poetically universal,' and this is highly adapted to art-works, for it satisfies the spectator, while allowing the artist to depict *his own* feelings.

The emotions will be those sanctioned by our sense of Beauty as understood in all the Arts, viz. they will be those emotions which are *æsthetical*, not preëminently ugly, nor filthy as regards object. Thus, higher love, etc. They will not be the lower impulses which might be represented in a novel, but which are not lofty enough for combination with Music. Amongst the most noble of our feelings are the *religious* feelings, (Cf. *Parsifal*.)

A word of warning is needed as regards the treatment of religious subjects in the Music-Drama. Religion as a Science (Theology) is totally unsuitable, not only for the Music-Drama, but for any 'presentative' Art. Such matter appeals too much to the intellect. But there is a certain emotional side of Religion, some of those emotions which man may feel towards Nature or God which are very different from theological quibbles. There is, further, a broad moral side to Religion which may or may not be applicable to the Music-Drama. In art-works it is very dangerous to confuse nobility with religious seriousness, or sensuous Beauty with moral Beauty. From a general view of Art, one is inclined to be very doubtful regarding the influence of Religion upon Art. Art owes a very great deal to Religion, but there are many cases in which Religion seems to have interfered with Art. As regards the Music-Drama, Wagner's *Parsifal* may not present the 'norm' of emotions. It is questionable whether the suffering of *Amfortas* is not a little too serious and prolonged, its moral implications a little too deep (*C 1*) for musical expression, or to agree with the qualities *B*, *C* and *D* of Music. Withal, keen suffering is not the field of Music, in spite of the somewhat justifiable modern reaction against 'unalloyed sweetness' and frivolity in Music. Two things seem liable to mislead us in regard to this question. In the first place, many are in revolt against the 'Opera,' and quite right perhaps, for with its connections of vocal and physiological gymnastics and musical debility it almost solicits disgust and a predilection for the very opposite qualities in Music. But, as has been suggested, the faults of the Opera were not so much that the Music was not dissonant as that it was not the best of Music, and particularly because it so palpably disagreed at times with the emotions of the personages, the characters of the drama, and particularly with the naturalistic situation displayed. The fault lay, not so much with the Music as with the play to which it was attached. With masterly Music, sincerity of musical dialogue, nobility of Drama, and an avoidance of suggestions of the outer aspects of everyday life, the Opera would perhaps have led to no great reaction against 'sweetness' in Music. A second cause that contributes to the reaction is probably the general *serious* tendency of modern man. He is oppressed by centuries of theological conclusions,

B

the great social contrasts and problems springing thereout, and by the overwhelming complexity of life and knowledge. Hence his natural tendency to cultivate the *serious* and *deep* side of Art. It is difficult not to be carried away by such a subject as *Parsifal*. It is just possible that Wagner was himself. Greek Philosophy may be quite as *deep* as modern Philosophy, but it is a little doubtful whether the Greek was quite as 'much in earnest' as the modern thinker is. Certainly Greek Religion seems to have lacked that awful seriousness which accompanies a deep sense of moral responsibility.

But the emotions of *Amfortas* can hardly be said to be highly musical. There is a very great difference between the proper use of dissonance and its prolonged use. (Cf. in this regard Liszt's *Dante* symphony, part i., *Inferno*.)

*C 1* (*C 1*) prescribes *simple* emotions, not complicated ones; Passion, and not mild sentiments partaking of the disinterestedness of intellectual processes. This largely coincides with *D* in its protest against Poetry and Drama not founded upon feeling. In this sense the 'primitive' emotions are those best suited in so far as they are capable of æsthetical treatment and consistent in other respects. Remoteness from our complicated and ratiocinating modern life, æsthetical, 'presentative,' simple and emotional, all these qualities coincide and reinforce one another as protests against an artificial (in its bad sense), heartless Style of Drama and Poetry for the Music-Drama.

*C 2* According with Drama in general, each emotion will be *motivirt*, viz. it will have its exciting cause, it will have its due effect, and it will play its important part in the dramatic development.

*E* (*E*) prescribes *impulsive* emotions, that is, such as tend to pass into action. Thus, the passions of love, anger, jealousy are highly expressive, they *impel* to action toward a *present person*, and these actions are just those things which will make the emotion-suggesting Music clear to us. All emotions do not impel to expression. An emotion which does not *impel* to gesture, action and speech will not make itself felt to the audience which has these forms of *expression* only from which to deduce the emotional condition of the actor. Moreover, highly fitted to Stage (Style) in general.

The affections are dramatic in the sense that they tend to act *outwards*, viz. affect some one else, and also because they are very intensely implicated in the act of volition (cf. p. 54). Although subjective as *felt*, they tend towards an effect which is objective, i.e. appreciable by other persons than the subject affected.

It may seem extraordinary, if not absurd, that the Music-Drama should make any exceptional requirements as regards the emotions entering into it. Moreover, to suggest that some emotions are more adapted to inclusion than others seems to imply a cold-blooded mode of constructing a drama. We like to fancy that a drama was written because the author could not

help writing it, and was likewise impelled by his feelings to write it just in the way he did. However justifiable any such expectations may be, it is probable that considerable thinking is implicated in the making of a drama. The point to be noticed here is that we have nothing to do with dictating the methods of constructing a play, but merely imagine what properties it would probably display if composed with feeling for the peculiar Art-field of the Music-Drama. It remains to be proved that the comprehension of such a general standard form would mislead a composer.

In seeking to indicate those emotions most adapted to the Music-Drama, we should remember that classification of the emotions depends partly upon the elements of (1) the exciting *cause*, (2) upon the *object* which the feeling may have. Thus, 'desire' is a Proteus-like emotion. Desire for woman's love is very different from desire for the possession of a particular municipal office. Some desires are usually excited by the 'presentation' of the concrete object desired. Other desires respond to complicated and invisible 'representations.' Whether desires and affections are fitted to inclusion in the Music-Drama depends largely upon the nature of the exciting *cause* and upon the *object*, and this is largely a matter coincident with 'Situation,' part (2).

Notice also that this holds for the feelings Pleasure and Pain. It is not only expedient that the painful side should not predominate in the Music-Drama, but also it is of great importance what *causes* the Pain and Pleasure and what its effect is, and all this is a part of 'situation' and action (3). It is by no means a matter of indifference. An accident to a train may cause pain, and sadness may be due to a "slump in stocks," but while both these *feelings* may be legitimate for inclusion in the Music-Drama, these particular causes have no place therein. Among the most vivid and dramatic causes and objects of emotion are human beings, and it is presumable that the Music-Drama will centre about these.

A somewhat instructive classification of the emotions is that given by Herbert Spencer in his 'Psychology,' vol. ii., from which the following definitions are taken:—

"*Presentative feelings*, ordinarily called sensations, are those mental states in which, instead of regarding a corporeal impression as of this or that kind, or as located here or there, we contemplate it in itself as pleasure or pain: as when inhaling a perfume.

*Presentative-representative feelings*, embracing a great part of what we commonly call emotions, are those in which a sensation or group of sensations, or group of sensations or ideas, arouses a vast aggregation of represented sensations, partly of individual experience, but chiefly deeper than individual experience, and, consequently, indefinite. The emotion of terror may serve as an example. . . .

*Representative feelings*, comprehending the ideas of the feelings above classed, when they are called up apart from the appropriate external

excitements . . . Instances of these are the feelings with which the descriptive poet writes, and which are aroused in the minds of his readers.

*Re-representative feelings*, under which head are included those more complex sentient states that are less the direct results of external excitements than the indirect or reflex results of them. The love of property is a feeling of this kind . . . The higher sentiments, as that of justice, are still more completely of this nature." For our purposes it makes no difference whether this classification is a possible one, or the best one, or the only one. The point is that it presents a certain broad fact about our feelings which is of the highest importance in art-works. The whole subject of the *degree of representativeness* is bound up in art-works with that of the minimum expenditure of mental energy of art-contemplator in the direction of mere labour. A high degree of representativeness means a *subtlety*—a removal from simplicity and naturalness that is portentous for art-works. This is more easily understood by a reference to the classification of the *cognitions* corresponding to the above by the same author. As regards Poetry, which deals with cognitions as well as feelings, it is of extreme importance to distinguish between words standing for a presentative sensation and for a highly re-representative cognition. The bluntness of our minds in feeling the difference between these is perhaps due to the prevalence in Poetry of much that is too abstract—too 'philosophical' in spite of the fact that such Poetry may not set forth explicitly any system of philosophy. To treat the matter in detail a whole book would be necessary. In order to gain an insight into the nature of those emotions fitted for inclusion under the general and particular 'situations' proposed by the conditions of the Music-Drama the serious reader is recommended to critically peruse the following contrasts, keeping in mind the above conditions in as concrete a form as possible.

<i>B</i>	Æsthetic	<i>rather than</i>	Non-æsthetic.
	Pleasurable	"	Painful.
	Pleasure	"	Pain.
<i>C I</i>	Sensuous	"	Formal.
	Natural	"	Artificial.
<i>A</i>	Pure human	"	Conventional.
	Instinctive	"	Rational.
	Primitive	}	{ Distinctively modern or dependent upon modern conditions or developed out of them.
<i>D</i>	Sthenic		
	+ Energy	"	Asthenic.
	Strong	"	— Energy.
	Pleasurable or sad.	"	Weak.
		"	Indifferent.

Dynamic	<i>rather than</i>	Static.	
Having concrete cause	„	not —	
„ „ object	„	„	
Excited by animate cause	„	„	
„ human cause	„	„	
Having human object	„	„	
Cause and object being one } and the same person }	„	„	
Direct	„	Reflective.	
Egoistic and non-egoistic	„	Indifferent.	
Emotions, and affections and } desires }	„	{ Sentiments, especially arti- ficial ones.	
Lofty	„	Lowly.	<i>B</i>
Impelling to expression }	„	{ Brooding, or speechless, or inhibiting.	<i>E</i>
Dramatic	„	Idyllic.	
Peripherally initiated	„	Centrally initiated.	
Immediate	„	Prospective or retrospective.	<i>C 1</i>
‘Presentative’	„	Representative.	<i>C 2</i>
Simple	„	Complex.	<i>C 3</i>
Musical	„	Non-musical.	<i>C 3 a</i>
Lyric	„	Non-lyric.	<i>&amp; E</i>

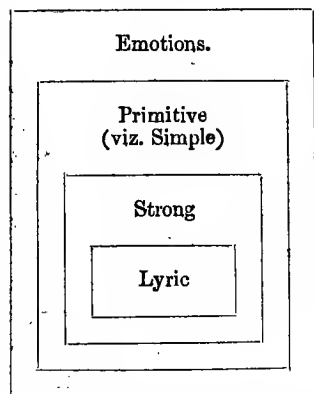
The character of poetical love is so ideal, so above our everyday relations to each other in life, that its expression impresses our sense of propriety as completely suited for the association with the also unrealistic or ideal element of Music.

The *æsthetical* aspect of ‘love’ in Art. A reason why the emotion of love is so highly fitted for artistic purposes may be found in the fact that love is the least *utilitarian* of our impulses. It is the emotion which seems to the one feeling it as farthest removed from the humdrum life about him, as it is certainly associated with the most that is *beautiful* in face, movement, body, etc. It is the *æsthetical emotion par excellence*. It leads the individual to a desire for all traits that are beautiful, and it is conceivable that this emotion alone might be capable of cultivating the *æsthetical* nature of a man by leading him to seek the beautiful, to notice those features which are beautiful, and open the way to a keen appreciation of the beauties of form and colour in nature, man and Art. In the sense of cultivating and stimulating man’s sense of Beauty the emotion of love stands alone among all emotions, for jealousy, hatred, anger, do not stimulate to the observation of that which is beautiful in nature, man, or Art. Moreover, the emotion of love is associated with *pleasure*, and in this respect approaches the *æsthetical* feelings which are founded on the more or less sensual pleasure to be derived from the contemplation of forms, shapes,

colours, tones. It is this emotion which may with propriety be looked upon as the most *ideal* (useless, lofty, etc.) of those which enter into our daily life. Pleasure in eating and sleeping is too obviously utilitarian—too associated with animal nature. But the emotion of love *presents itself* to each individual as unutilitarian, although its end or purpose as apprehended by *a posteriori* reasoning may convince us of its deep utilitarianism from the standpoint of *Nature*. (Cf. Schopenhauer.) This is one of the strangest features of this wonderful emotion, which, from the *objective* standpoint as observed through the eye of reason, is intensely animal and utilitarian, nevertheless *presents itself* to each individual as so highly ideal and unutilitarian—as relative to his or her *pleasure* only, and subservient to an end which is completely hidden by the *present* and monopolising pleasure of the emotion. However, whatever the *reason* may be, the facts of art-works as a whole show that love is *the* artistic emotion. An argument for the ‘ideal’ (beautiful and expressional) nature of the emotion of love is that it alone among all the emotions seems *naturally* lyrical to us (*viz.* lyrical in everyday life even). In a musical Drama the Music requires that the action or situations should *not* be taken from real life, and we feel the unnaturalness of presenting any of the relations of our daily life in their daily common dress, *except one*, that is *love*. We do tolerate that. The proper expression of this emotion seems to be melody, and its accompaniment Music (harmony) even in its everyday aspect.

The emotions must be taken from the category of *strong*, for only such *impel* to strong means of expression. Love, jealousy, hatred, and revenge are highly ‘dramatic’ in that they are strong, impulsive, and are directed towards an object, and that a *human* object.

The sphere of *lyrical* emotions. To be *lyrical*, the dramatic emotions ought to be lyrical, in the sense of demanding expression in *Music and Song*. The *situation* must be



lyrical, *viz.* the action and the *scene* must be lyrical, *viz.* ‘Scenery,’ appurtenances, and costume are a *part* of this ‘*Style*.’ Wagner as a musical composer writing his own dramatic part was the first to radically depart from the method of taking a drama written for a *spoken* drama and altering it to make it fitter for the *Music-Drama*. He made his dramatic text “musical” *ab initio*. No *rehash* of some other Art with all the necessary inconsistencies resulting from the transference of one Art to another. With Wagner the musical influence is ever present in the *same* mind with the creative dramatist, hence the influence is constantly exerted on the embryo drama to render that drama ‘*lyrical*’ in every respect. The *lyrical* emotions are roughly those which *compel* expression, but the *Music-Drama* is more limited than the *spoken Drama* in that *all* emotions which *compel* expression do not *compel* expression in *Music* or *Song*.

To make this clear, the diagram in the margin shows by the outer line the total field of emotions.

Among these are the emotions which are simple in their character and purely human in the sense of the legacy of the whole human race. Within this there are some emotions that are impulsive—that is, that strive for expression. Among these are some emotions, represented by the innermost square [rectangle] that are lyric, viz. seek expression in song or something analogous thereto.

Those who are familiar with Verdi's *Otello* (as performed) may gain a clearer idea of what is meant by a 'lyrical situation' and lyric emotions by contrasting their impressions of the first and fourth acts with those of the *third* act. The difference for the Style of the Music-Drama between the love-scene of the first act (or the 'Ave Maria' of the fourth) and the assembly scene of the third act (reception of the legate) is very great, and has perhaps reflected itself in the *Music* even. Notice the accumulation of unlyric elements of situation in act iii. sc. 8. (Chorus in various groups talking together.)

A somewhat similar case of conflicting materials (as regards the subject of the Music-Drama) may be observed in works of 'fiction.' Thus the novels of Sir Walter Scott may sometimes be easily divided into two parts, one the 'human' part which every one can understand and is likely to be interested in, and a second part which is 'unhuman' in the sense that it deals with historical events or conditions which appeal to the intellect and not to the emotions. The latter part is often 'skipped' by readers, and often read as a matter of duty by others.

Metaphorically speaking, the 'human' part of these novels might be spoken of as 'lyrical'—as artistic; and the historical part as fitted to the student, as scientific—as unæsthetic. It is absurd to think of conveying in *songs* such dissertations on history as occur in these historical novels, while the parts which deal with human passions and feeling might serve as a groundwork for a musical Drama. Music is ideal or subjective, and can therefore be associated with the subjective movements of human emotions. If a work of art would satisfy the reasons for its existence, it should not require the application of the intellects of its devotees to any great extent; art-works are to make happy the leisure hours of man's life, not add labour to that of his hard working hours: and if art-works are to appeal to the people at large they must appeal to that most widely distributed element of man's nature—the *senses, emotions* and sentiments. The business relations of our everyday life are far too complex to appeal to the sensibilities of men, hence their proper medium of conveyance is written or spoken language. Even in the case of 'recited' Drama, a complexity of action is often sought for by modern writers that demands too great an exercise of the *intellect* to allow of the audience grasping the ideas without great trouble.

I have elsewhere ventured the opinion that much of the debasement of Arts arises from 'overlapping of Arts,' viz. from the attempt to imitate in one Art designs, etc., which were the outcome of the Tools, Mode of Execution, etc., of another Art (process). The risks of this in the Music-Drama (where there are several Arts seeking for separate and combined expression at one and the same time) will be patent to any one who thinks seriously about it.

D

C 1  
&  
DC 1  
C 2

That Music overlapped Drama in the "Opera" is manifest in the subordination of feeling to 'musical-form.' It is possible that in Wagner's case the opposite tendency obtained, but was kept in abeyance by his sensitive Æsthetic feelings.

The act of volition under distracting impulses is impressive as an *inner* process even. (Naïvely shown by soliloquy accompanying decision and audible 'weighing the question.') But the Stage 'for explanation' requires the object to be present (*C 2*). The Music-Drama requires for its easy comprehensibility the consensus of *all* the means of expression possible. The inner Drama must be rendered clear, vivid, and forcible. Here we see another reason why modern life is not fitted to the Style of the Music-Drama. The sword is no longer worn in civil life. The Dramas of our everyday life have largely become '*inner*' Dramas. They enact themselves without any swords or violent expressions, or rattle of musketry. With all this lack of the spectacular they may nevertheless be very hard combats. A man holding a high position in the government and imbued with sentiments of honour and respect towards the people who have elected him to honestly fill his position, may be exposed by circumstances to temptations which make his '*inner*' life quite as dramatic as that of any romantic '*hero*'; yet his drama in not taking money or bribes, or in not yielding to social adulation or popular pressure hardly seems heroic even, for it is a *negative* act. It is certainly not lyrical.



## 6. INSTRUMENTAL STYLE.

In Part II. was discussed the function of Music in general, and something was said of its power of suggesting emotions. It is interesting to try to account for this quality.

*Expressive Powers of Music.*—It is important to see that the expressive power of Music is marvellously widened in R. Wagner's musical Dramas through the power of the action to determine the tone of pathos of the Music. The important function fulfilled by the scenery, pantomime, and declamation, is to fix the *tone* of the pathos, to be its determinant by placing the hearer in the proper *environment* for feeling the full power of expression of the Music. In modern life we repudiate to a great extent the aid of pantomime in making our feelings more expressive to others, but where the indefinite expressive agency of *Music* is concerned, a single gesture or movement of the actor's body may throw light on a whole passage of Music. The effect of the scenery in putting us in the proper mood for appreciating the force or beauty of the Music is usually overlooked, because we are so familiar with the presence of scenery, and because the effect which it exercises on our senses is so subtle and distant.

Let any one consider how much light is thrown on the remarkable change in Music in the first act of *Tannhäuser* by the collateral complete scenic change from the rose grotto of Venus with its wild passionate music to the calm green landscape of the Wartburg with the completely simple and Idyllic song of the shepherd watching his flock and playing on his pipe. The full effect of the change of music would be impossible in a concert presentation. (Of course, if the change had once been *seen* on the stage, much of it might be replaced in a concert from memory, but it still remains true that it was the dramatic presentation which first threw a clear light on the music.)

How it is that our eyes can aid our minds in divining what cannot be seen, i.e. the invisible emotions of the actors, may be explained by the fact that there is a uniformity of occurrence in things mental and physical, underlying our instinctive mental association of an outward phenomenon (such as a 'situation' on the stage), with some particular feeling attributed to the persons concerned. Were this not so, assured suggestion of emotions would not be possible, for it is founded upon mental association, viz. upon uniformity in the mode of occurrence in our past experience. The function of Music is to strengthen the suggested emotion ('re-presentative'), not to independently excite an emotion. It may be a form of symbolism, but it is not cold formal symbolism, and we continually apply it in our everyday life.

Music is animated or vivified by the hearer just as words are. The listener to Music experiences certain emotions of exaltation, etc., and spontaneously infuses these subjective feelings into their objective *cause*, and so animates what is really no more than a *stimulus* or excitant of

feeling—Music—not feeling itself. In the same way man projects himself into words, and feels that the idea which a word excites in his mind *lay in the word itself*—although the ideas which a book is capable of exciting do *not* hover about the book at all; there *are no ideas* in the book itself, although we fancy that the ideas which the writer was conscious of really detached themselves from his brain and localised themselves on those pages of paper. One feels as if ideas could really become something else than *subjective experiences* confined to our minds as they are, and when we speak of the transfer of thoughts we vaguely fancy that thoughts can leave the mind of one person (through the lips!), and winging their way through the air finally make their way into the mind of another person.

Words are not feelings, nor can a word expressive of a phase of feeling excite that feeling for which it stands (the word “pleasure” for instance, cannot directly excite the *feeling* pleasure, but only the *idea* pleasure, which is intellectual, not sensuous. Music can directly *give* pleasure and cause discomfort. Although no musical motive can by itself excite a definite emotion such as revenge, jealousy, desire of power, love, etc., yet the general character of the Music may *suggest* an idea of these emotions by affecting our feelings in respect of *pleasure* and *pain in the same manner* as these feelings of pleasure and pain would be evoked by the emotions of revenge, anger, love. This is where Music fulfils its great function, for it makes *vivid* that part of the (unfamiliar) Drama which appeals to us—the emotions. Music can reach the region of *particular* emotions by utilising their implications with the broader phases of feeling—*pleasure* and *pain*.

*Methods of Composing.*—We have now to speak of the Style of the Music from the standpoint of its construction. Respecting Music in general, we may speak of two different methods of writing an extensive piece of Music. One is to compose a series of pieces, each complete in itself and distinct from the others; this may be termed the *serial* method. The other method is to choose several themes which, after having been rendered in their simplest form, recur in a more or less varied form throughout the course of the piece. This may be termed the *symphonic* method. The first is familiar to us in the succession of chorus, aria, ensemble, duet, etc., of the ‘Opera’; the other in the symphonies of Beethoven, etc. The first seems to savour of orchestral Music founded on vocal Music—a succession of songs. The second method possesses the recommendation of having been pre-eminently a development of *instrumental* Music: viewed as a device of composers it offers the advantage that a musical idea is better utilised than if it were merely presented without being further developed. In a composition of the proportions of an ‘Opera,’ the serial method presents a good deal of difficulty to the composer in demanding continual creations of new songs, etc. To see some of the results of the serial method, we need only to remark how danger-

ously alike some of the arias may be in a single Opera; still more obvious when we compare the arias from the many works of some particular composer of Operas, and further, the family likeness which radiates from arias from the Operas of various composers.

Another result was the dry *recitative* which was a necessary feature of serial song writing. Perhaps the family likeness would have been much more startling, had not conventional recitative come to the aid of the composer in filling out the gaps between his lyrical flights; cf. Musical Stuffing in symphonies, and reasons therefor.

The *symphonic* method, on the other hand, allows the themes to be 'utilised' in two ways, by 'variations' on them, and by their recurrence. A theme in the composer's mind may become a sort of stimulant to further composition, if it be allowed freedom to expand itself in 'variations.' Moreover, the *recurrence* of a theme, even in an unvaried form, is pleasing to the hearer, if the recurrence be separated by some distance (*viz.* time) from its previous occurrence. That themes heard in the 'overture' of an opera recur during the subsequent course of the opera is not unpleasing. Hence, without further reasons, we might be justified in advocating the symphonic method for the orchestral part of the Music-Drama.

*Motives.*—The extended use of the leading-motive method of composition by Wagner is one of the most brilliant of innovations. Every one who has listened to Italian operas (for instance) must have been struck by the efforts of the composer to vary his airs, not only from those of other composers, but from those which appear in a multitudinous succession in the same opera score even. As for the 'endings' (cadence) of songs, they approximate towards certain types which have become almost settled facts and conventional. The terminations of duets are particularly cloying, at once honied and hackneyed. As pleasing as the 'full stop' or satisfactory cadence is, it becomes noticeably monotonous when indulged in too freely: such repetitions are noticeable in Mozart's *Figaro*, even.

On the other hand, who has ever complained of the repetition of motives or themes in the symphonies of Beethoven, or more striking yet, in the variations of one single theme, cf. those of Brahms and Dvůřák. It is often the development which is most attractive. In the extension and changes of the original theme, all the ingenuity of the composer is shown, and new beauties brought into being.

"Whoever accuses Wagner of 'poverty in musical invention,' condemns also, for instance, *Beethoven*, for upon how few motives did he found his symphonies!

"This (symphonic) Style required for each sentence (division, period, passage, *composition*) only two themes, which express the fundamental idea from two sides, in the characters of man and woman so to speak."—*Benoit*.

There are, however, special reasons for this procedure. The possibility of the extensive application of the method, is a result of the nature of Drama. A Drama may be looked upon as a more or less full exposition of the development and effects of certain emotions, which in relation to the Drama may be termed the *dramatic motives*. They are the threads out of which the dramatic web is woven. In other words, they are related to the Drama as the *musical* 'motives' are related to the piece which is made from *their* development and interweaving. Now, as we have already proposed Music as the representative of the emotions concerned in the Drama, it is conceivable that the musical motives, and their musical web, may be made to correspond exactly with the dramatic web. Wherever a phase of emotion recurs in the one, a phase of musical expression (motive) occurs in the other. The Music will then correspond in the finest details with the dramatic development, and the Stage will become the intimate expression and exposition of the Music.

To recognise the depth of the inner relation between the Stage and the Music, effected by making a musical motive the reflection of a dramatic motive, we only need compare the result with what would happen if the symphonic method were employed, without observing any relation between the dramatic motives and the musical themes. We should realise the benefits accruing to the Music from the employment of the symphonic method, but the recurrence of a theme in the Music would not coincide with the emotional state with which it coincided previously. The inner Drama and the Music would run their respectively different ways—the musical development would not so *intimately* correspond with the dramatic development. Were we dealing with a mere 'epical' series of scenes, the result would not be of such importance, but we have postulated a strictly *dramatic* action for the Music-Drama, consequently an intensely intimate relation between the Music and the dramatic development is of prime importance. Any aid to this should be seized upon, and this is effected when 'leading themes' in the Music are associated with the 'leading motives' of the dramatic development. If the leading emotional impulses recur, and if musical themes are to recur, associate the themes and the impulses, and they will recur together with redoubled import and force. The variations and recurrence of the themes will no longer be dictated by mere caprice or by musical laws, foreign to dramatic development, but will spring from that very dramatic development which it is their function to present to the senses of the hearer. Here we have at last really dramatic Music, breathing life in every part, excluding 'episode' throughout.

Compare a portion of Mozart's operas with *Tristan*. The first is marked by the parts into which the Music divides itself; the second work is marked by the difficulty of removing a part without making any additions to give it a satisfactory 'closed form.' Mozart's Music is continually pulling up, coming to a full close, and then starting again.

This is a vital point, for the dramatic effect is often deranged by these purely external stops and starts. The dialogue is *continuous*, and these musical breaks tend to make it unnaturally fragmentary. (Contrast operas with the continuity of spoken dialogue.)

We gain in several ways by the adoption of this method of composing. With respect to the *composer* himself, it gives a natural impetus to the work of composing. He has now the clear dramatic threads to suggest the musical character of each theme, and to stimulate the evolution of the theme itself. Moreover, he is obliged to grasp the dramatic development, and this is something of a surety against the trite procedure of merely preparing a musical score to fit the *words* of a libretto, without any more than a casual glance at the drama, which "lies outside his domain."

C3

Once having generated his themes at the instigation of the dramatic motives, their subsequent association is merely a part of his mental nature—the recurrence of one becomes the cause of the recurrence of the other, and the 'variations' of the musical theme are suggested by the varied nature of the situations in which they recur in connection with the recurrence of the corresponding dramatic motives.

With respect to the *audience*, the method means: a greater variety in the Music, due to the composer renouncing the effort to compose a series of long 'arias' (all different!) and the monotonous *recitative* which was necessary as stuffing; a greater 'unity' (continuity) in the Style of the Music, since the themes are interwoven through the whole musical fabric, and the sharp division into 'lyrical' portions and recitative is spontaneously abolished; a greater dramatic effectiveness of the Music, due to the cumulative effect of the recurrence of each leading motive, and its enforced import due to continued and invariable association with a certain dramatic motive; further, a recalling (reminiscent) power of the Music enabling it to sensuously suggest past occurrences. These are some of the advantages which accompany the use of leading motives in composing.

The music of Richard Wagner's Music-Dramas is more than mere emotional or programme music, it is Music *dramatised*. It is not only emotional—it is *dramatic*, and this in two senses. First, the leading motives are not mere musical phrases which agree in a general way with the words of the dialogue which they accompany—they are motives in the sense of *dramatic* motives. As compared with *pure formal* music they are infused with a personality—are rendered *anthropomorphic*. The mere music is *vivified* by having the breath of life breathed into it by the creator of the Drama. The music is a *personification* as compared with mere formal music.

Secondly, there is a *dramatic unity* in Music composed by leading motives corresponding to the *dramatic unity* of the dramatic action. The themes are real 'motives' to action—they recur as the dramatic motives recur. There is really no episode. If one *aria* followed another, the whole would be episode as compared with this music in which each musical 'motive' is a recurring feature, and gives dramatic unity to the whole.

C3

Just as a single emotion or a string of emotions does not constitute a 'drama,' so no musical theme or string of them makes dramatic music, viz. for the Music-Drama. This point is reached only when each emotional impulse entering into the Drama has received its particular musical exponent, and these musical counterparts have been *arranged in the same order as that which the 'impulses' follow in the actual Drama*.

C2  
E

*C2* The *apparatus* of the action of the 'Opera' was too obvious. The opening chorus, the interspersed arias, duets, concerted pieces, etc., were so obviously imposed on the action from considerations entirely *outside* of the natural requirements of the dramatic action. The distribution did not spring from the natural exigencies of the Drama, but rather from the considerations of musical effect. The *process* was like designing the façade of a building and then compelling the building to conform to it; but the *effect* is more exasperating on account of its suggestion of insincerity and lack of feeling (*C4*).

*D* *Leading Motives: Recitative.*—The rising and sinking of the orchestra in accordance with the feelings of the actor, and the change in the vocal part from the song to the recitative, find an analogy in Drama when the lofty poetic diction is followed by *prose* dialogue for the less emotional parts. In this respect the differentiation of the Music of the Opera into 'aria' and dry 'recitative' was justified—the latter serving to convey ideas which were important for the comprehension of the action, the former to express the more emotional part of the action. The fault of this procedure lay in the harshness of the transition from lyrical parts to the 'recitative' and in the utter conventionality of the process. The sudden drop from vocal melody with full orchestral accompaniment to the dead effect of barren recitative was likely to produce a shock like that experienced at the drop from vocal dialogue to spoken dialogue in some operas.

*C4* Further, the conventional succession (order) of 'introductory recitative and aria' is suggestive of an absence of feeling on the part of the singer.

The advantages of the division may be realised, and the fault of abrupt transition eliminated, by making the larger part of the vocal part in the style of recitative, and by not allowing the orchestral part to rise and sink so *suddenly*, as it often did in the Opera in passing from recitative to aria, and *vice versa*.

*C3* The leading motive as a cause of *musical unity* (or *continuity*). The unity in the music of Wagner's later works may be partly attributed to his method of composing by 'leading motives' instead of by songs, or by arbitrary divisions of the text. The word 'recitative' does not become a signal to him to lay aside all his talents as a composer and write a purely conventional series of notes for the voice. His orchestra is not a mere accompanying instrument for accompanying at certain times, and to sink into obscurity at other times. It is all-pervading.

The recurrence of emotions and ideas in the course of the dramatic action compels a recurrence of the corresponding motives in the Music, and consequently *ensures* a certain unity in the style of the Music. The motives reappear throughout the whole of the score; they are the threads which prevent the Music from appearing like a succession of songs, each composed at a different time and in a different style. Each of Wagner's (later) works displays a (musical) unity like that of a bronze figure which has been cast at a single founding. However, it is not a pure musical unity like that of a symphony.

In reference to the method of composing by 'leading motives' as affecting the ease and style of composition, the case of Wagner may be taken. The music of *Rienzi* is not without its merits, but there are parts where the vocal melody suggests a difficulty in trying to find something novel within the old lines. It seems possible that his subsequent

originality in music was owing rather to the application of a new *method* of composing than to the increased practice in *composing*, for the change came after his thirtieth year. The composition of wholly original 'arias' seems to have offered difficulties at times, but when dramatic feeling dictated the music, and the methods of composing with 'leading motives' had been elaborated, and absolute and despotic vocal melody had been renounced, originality did not require to be so sedulously sought after. Wagner speaks of the composition of the music to *Tristan* as having been a real pleasure. To write a song, or set a number of notes in a certain series which shall differ from any other series ever conceived, and to make this series conform to certain rules of succession of the notes, is to make that which *precludes* caprice or variety—viz. *rules*—produce something that shall possess great originality—viz. differ from those existing series (songs, &c.) from which those very rules were drawn. *A posteriori* rules are to produce in an *a priori* fashion something different from that from which they are drawn. This is the difficulty which is pressing in the case of 'arias' founded on a 'one line' (the *vocal melody*) method of composing.

But when the rules consequent on purely formal music are left somewhat in the background, and dramatic feeling becomes the prime mover in the act of composing—an impetus so *general* in its nature—so undefined as compared with rigid rule, that it does not demand any one melody or series of harmonies, it may excite many different musical phrases as a fit expression of itself. Cold reflection is a poor substitute for an enthusiastic impulse as an impetus in composing. The musical 'continuity' which is likely to result from the method of composing by leading motives is indicated by the great difficulty of making excerpts from Wagner's later works without doing violence to the music. This is not the case to the same extent in his earlier works.

The Music of part of the *Flying Dutchman* seems to indicate that Wagner was a proficient composer at this early period even, therefore it seems probable that the whole change in the Style of his Music from this work to *Götterdämmerung* was not so much due to Wagner's increased practice in composing Music as in his employment and development of the method of composing which heralded itself in the *Flying Dutchman*. The changes in the musical form may be referred to the employment of a method by which the flow of the Music was (in smallest detail) governed by the dramatic development rather than exterior musical form.

Thus, in Music one may have the mere serial or epical Style, or one may have the recurrent or dramatic Style, in which the musical current corresponds to the sequence of dramatic motives in the drama which it accompanies.

The theme becomes more momentous with each repetition or recurrence. There is a *cumulative* effect due to repetition of experience. In fact, the efficiency of the leading-motive in recalling a situation or in impressing an inner character upon our minds is founded upon the psychological fact of 'mental association.' In a symphony the recurrence and development of themes is somewhat restricted—localised. In the Music-Drama, on the contrary, a theme is liable to recur in any part, irrespective of scene or act. It might be conjectured that themes would recur in any and all of the Music-Dramas! There are some isolated cases of such inter-recurrences in Wagner's works, but a moment's thought will show that such a practice would not be salutary. In fact, the way in which Drama can

react upon composition in the composer's mind seems to be displayed by the very remarkable '*character*' (viz. individuality) displayed by the *Music* of each of Wagner's works. Any one who has listened to a concert performance of instrumental excerpts from Wagner's various works, from the *Flying Dutchman* up to *Parsifal*, can testify to the remarkable *musical distinctness* of each. There is a *timbre*, a '*colouring*' about Wagner's leading motives which seems to 'come naturally' without being sought for in a musical direction.

*Music as Means of Expression.*—In commenting on the power of Music to arouse *concrete images*, it is usually forgotten that, where the mind has experienced a certain melody in connection with a certain *scene*, there is a form of '*mental association*,' and hence in the same category as speech, for if the associated experience be impressed on the mind, the recurrence of the *one* experience will *cause a recurrence of the image* of the concrete scene, and hence Music may speak as *language* if it only *adopt* the same principle—mental association.

In Wagner's works there is this *association* of the spectacular, or that which appeals to the *eye*, with the Music or that which appeals to the *ear*. The efficiency of the leading motive is founded on the same principle, and increases the '*expressive power*' of Music accordingly. Moreover, Wagner plays upon this principle in still another way. In Siegfried's death-scene the awakening of Brünnhilde *recurs* to Siegfried—here we have the '*expressive power*' of Music displayed in all its noble *beauty* and in its *strength*. The recurrence of the *Music* of the awakening (the strange chords and figure of *Siegfried*, act iii. sc. 3) becomes the cause of a recurrence of the '*concrete*' images formerly associated with it—the scene of the awakening of Brünnhilde by Siegfried. This is a most splendid instance of the '*expressive power*' of Music raised to the point of vivid reminiscence. Another case is the recurrence of the *curse-motive* throughout the Trilogy. Thus the faculty of memory is added to that of emotions, feelings, and will-power in the faculties of musical expression.

The *Flying Dutchman* contains instances of this reminiscent application of Music. Also *Lohengrin*, iii. 2, where Elsa *remembers* the Swan. It is just herein that we can discern the *naturalness* of the procedure of employing '*leading motives*,' for it is founded upon that phase of memory known as '*mental association*.' Its mode of origin in Wagner's case, as related by himself, with regard to the *Flying Dutchman*, shows this. Nothing exceeds the subtlety with which these associations are formed by the effect of a lively imagination under the influence of the emotional impulse.

So Richard Wagner raised the '*expressive power*' of Music far beyond its narrow limitations in programme Music: by combining *scenery*, *pantomime*, and *dialogue*, with *Music* he renders Music capable of actually exciting *concrete images* with little *possibility of error*, whereas the Symphony excites the most '*diverse concrete*' ideas in different minds. (Cf. different '*interpretations*' of Beethoven's symphonies.)

However, *such* uses of the leading motive must not presuppose any *effort* on the part of the spectator to remember musical themes, either in the matter of committing them to memory or of recalling them. This is a point wherein musicians are liable to be misled by the facility with which they recognise themes. But it will not do to depend upon this faculty on the part of all observers, and its abuse by the composer would be totally contrary to the spirit of *C1* and *C2*. Leading-motives should not be turned into mechanical problems for the memory—however much pleasure



it may give professional musicians to isolate them, and name them, and reason about them. This is a case where 'shop' is liable to interfere with a lofty Art.

To suppose that the hearer must in addition to following all the intricacies of the Music-Drama carry on a sort of running commentary upon musical form in general, as well as that displayed by the composition under review in particular, is asking a little too much. We have already suggested the *extreme complexity* of the mental activities concerned in the audition of the Music-Drama and the danger that lies therein for the Art. Those who would make such a demand as the above would probably belong to one of the following classes of hearers of music: (1) the more or less professional musician who, with the tendencies of the pedagogue, would fain exercise his professional duties associated with teaching the *grammar* of music; (2) the musical 'critic' who feels himself bound to decide upon the *comparative merits* of each piece of music with which he comes in contact, somewhat like the compulsion which the newspaper critic feels to say *something*, whether it be entirely called for or not; (3) the hearer who has been used to listening to 'independent' music solely, and is accustomed to busy himself during the performance of a work with problems in technical analysis. He cannot renounce a source of pride that has given him so much trouble to acquire from books, etc., and this in the presence of music even that does not *propose* to display any artificial 'form,' and hence he suffers much from any *absence* of this form. The same considerations apply to the search for 'leading motives' in Wagner's works. It is a predisposition of the mind like that implied by the assertion that a composer could not *create* without certain rules. The painter Turner is said to have found great difficulties in explaining clearly the subject of 'perspective,' but *painting* in perspective does not seem to have given him much trouble.

The idea that 'the enjoyment of Music *without* the above mental comment is a sort of immoral sensuality' is a naïve predisposition which amounts to a firm (although unexpressed) belief in the minds of some people. An explanation of this may probably be found in the fact that those people who have taken the most interest in the *higher flights* of Music have, on the whole, been the most highly developed *intellectually*. It is a rudiment of that hierarchal age of 'the Grand Monarch'—or of the witty period of Voltaire. It is not confined to Music, but is particularly prevalent in literature, in which it suggests the period in which those who were not masters of a dead language were irretrievably debarred from literary enjoyment and the possession of any opinion concerning Literature. It is one of the most obstinate predispositions, and seems to enjoy almost a religious sanction in the minds of some people puritanically disposed. The prime error is probably in the refusal to distinguish between *different* kinds of sensuous enjoyment which, if applied to *intellectual* activity, would

amount to the monstrous assertion that mathematical reasoning was wicked, because it was through reasoning that a clever fraud was practised by some villain. Feeling may have its bad surroundings, and so may ideas too. But all *ideas* are not filthy, nor is musical enjoyment so, however "sensuous" it may be.

Likewise in extolling the expressive powers of Music one must not go too far. For our purposes it is only necessary to take the safe "middle road." Programme Music can be very suggestive — especially to the professional musician, but from considerations of Art in general, it seems expedient that the Music should possess a *face value*—a musical Beauty as well as any deep complex concrete meaning. That Music is suggestive is a matter of experience. It is just possible that R. Wagner inclined in practice a little too strongly towards the feasibility of Music as a means of accurately exciting definite concrete images, and this in spite of his notable objection to the idea of programme Music. Some of his own 'programmes' display this (cf. that to 9th Symphony). It is questionable whether Music could of itself suggest the figure ("slender," etc.) of Tannhäuser (cf. *Tannhäuser*-overture), and that a first hearing of the prelude to *Lohengrin* would ensure the visions of the approach of the Grail without any preliminaries is very doubtful. Certainly *leading-motives* cannot be called into requisition to explain a prelude which *precedes* the Music-Drama in which they occur. The difference between such an assumption and the case of the death march of *Siegfried* is immense. It is very fortunate that Wagner's overtures and preludes possess that *face value* above referred to, and one is almost inclined to the opinion that the function of the prelude should pretend to no more than the preparation of the mind for the subsequent Drama or following scene.

To suppose that music could excite anything so concrete as a cup, or as a *particular* cup to the average person hearing it for the first time is expecting too much of music, and if assumed in theory might lead to very doubtful art procedures by those composers who are naturally attracted towards the 'symphonic poem' by that 'expectancy' which the frequent performance of parts of Wagner's works in concerts has given rise to in the minds of average concert frequenters.

Wagner's method of composing by means of the leading-motives is a means of directly extending the expressive powers of Music, for the method makes use of the psychological fact of *mental association*. It is necessary to see that the process of association is capable of increasing the expressiveness of Wagner's works *enormously*, in fact it is the basis of *language* itself. "*Convention*" is only another term for general *mental association*. Moreover, the association of an idea with a vocal sound may be entirely *capricious*, for the presence of the sensation of the sound in the mind of the hearer will be sufficient to arouse the idea arbitrarily associated with the given sound. By the employment of leading motives the expressive possi-

bilities of Music are raised to that of *language* almost. That musical notes can actually perform the same function as speech, even in cases where distinctness is very important, is shown by the use of *bugle calls* for giving commands to large bodies of men in military manoeuvres in war and peace.

Moreover, in Wagner's total drama the associated factors are so *multifold*—acting—situation, speech itself (dialogue), and symbolism of objects—all these things conspire to fasten the meaning of a certain musical theme on the mind—all the more forcibly by reason of their complexity and number. As the auditor is conscious of a certain theme or motive in the orchestra, so he is conscious at the same time of the stage 'setting'—the *general environment*; of the animate and inanimate objects—of the preceding *action*, &c. The culminating scene of act i. of *Walküre* is sufficient to stamp the significance of the 'sword-fanfare' lastingly upon the mind of the spectator, so tremendous is the cumulation of effect—the sword flashing in the hand of Siegmund—drawn from the tree-trunk at a time of keenest need, swung before the wondering eyes of Sieglinde who has led Siegmund to the gaining of the sword—revenge for her rape, and love for herself. The conditions of this culmination are such that the significance of that fanfare is stamped in a lasting manner upon the mind of the spectator.

In order that Music alone may excite concrete images (representations of *objects*, not merely phases of pathos), the hearer must first know the particular images which the Music is to excite (given by a printed programme), and he must further know what part of the Music applies to a particular image, otherwise there will be no surety nor uniformity.

No programme can efficiently secure this. Programme Music calls for intellectual activity on the part of the hearer in 'checking off' his images; that they may coincide with the Music as it proceeds. This is inconsistent with the thorough enjoyment of the Music.

On the contrary, the Music-Drama supplies those images *directly* to the mind by placing them before the eye. It calls for no intellection on the part of the hearer; the objects are there before him, and their *order of presentation* coincides with their order in the Music. No acts of judgment in 'checking off' are required, nor does the mental labour of evolving the images devolve on the hearer, all this is done for him on the stage by the prepared concurrence of the stage, and of the Music constituting the performance.

Nor is any "convention" required; the convention is effected by the simultaneous effects of the Music and the situation to which it refers. It is absurd to suppose that each leading motive must be known previously and associated with the object or personage to whom it relates—if the *performance* does not do this sufficiently in itself there is something wrong.

Programme Music presupposes an audience of trained musicians. The Music-Drama possesses the most natural means of establishing a mental association, namely—*visible situation* contiguous with (accompanied by) orchestral Music of a characteristic (adapted) kind. Thus the two sets of sensations are impressed on the mind in *association*, which means that if one set recurs (the Music for instance), the other set is liable to recur.

So far as mental association is concerned, a picture-lesson could not be more fortunate, for the two sets of sensations are not only synchronous (contiguous), but they are *like* in kind—have the same emotional spring (association by contiguity and *likeness* or by identity of cause.) This shows us again why the leading motive is most dramatic, for by it, *episode* is excluded.

We can picture the mind of the hearer as actually craving the recurrence of like strains of music with the recurrence of a situation or emotion like those which previously accompanied the situation or expression of the emotion, and being disturbed by the obtrusion of a completely new orchestral score as a result of writing a series of songs to a given text. The (expectancy) *naturalness* of the procedure is evinced by the mode of origin of the employment of the leading motive in Wagner's mind.

That the *image* of a certain dramatic situation which the musician has associated with a particular musical phrase should cause that phrase to recur is so *natural*, that it seems difficult to see why it did not produce its effect long before Wagner took advantage of it; that is, did not lead to *spontaneous* use.

Music, in combination with acting, can tell us the state of mind of the actor, although it may not be able to tell us the ideas which are passing through the mind of the actor. If he is sitting with his eyes on a book and the music is suggestive of quiet contemplation (*Meistersinger*, act iii. sc. 1) we need be in no doubt concerning the nature of the situation or of the state of the person's mind. The music may also tell us the nature of the thoughts which are passing through his mind, whether they are pleasant (*Siegfried*, act ii. sc. 5?) or exasperating (*Meisters.*, Beckmesser in act iii. sc. 3). Combined with violent gestures, the music may suggest an excited condition of the mind (Mime's fear, *Siegfried*, act i. sc. 3; Brünhilde's rage, *Götterdämmerung*, act iii., &c.). But the expressive power of music does not stop at merely suggesting the emotional state of a mind. In connection with the *dramatic development* it may essay to suggest the state of *pathos*, the particular emotion which is affecting the mind, for the development of the drama is here a determinant of what the mind *naturally would experience*; the music working with this as a basis can intensify the suggestion which the stage gives (*Tristan and Isolde*, act i. sc. 3, just after the fatal potion has been drained). That music may give us the key to a religious situation is a matter of common experience in church music (solemnity, devotion, religious exaltation, jubilant spirit, &c.).

Without the aid of vocal expression even, music can also tell us the images which are predominant in the actor's mind, if they refer to a former situation of which we have been spectators. The recurrence of the music excites an image of the situation which accompanied it, and thus we transfer to the mind of the actor, if the present situation demands it, Beckmesser's remembrance of the turmoil on the previous evening. The last great step in extending the expressional powers of music is the addition of words. The last loop-hole of doubt as to the emotions concerned in a situation is sealed by the presence of words capable of exciting *distinct* ideas in the mind of the hearer. "Words" are not in themselves emotions, nor do they necessarily excite emotions in us as hearers, but they may be significant of emotions which the actor is experiencing, and they may excite in us the idea of the particular emotion which is impelling him to an act. However, we do not often require the action to actually inform us of his emotions *by name*. Even with speech we still reserve for ourselves the pleasure of *discerning* rather than by being flatly told. The great service which speech can perform is to inform us, not of the emotion itself, but of its surrounding circumstances. The novelist is able to name an emotion, and treat its development in a full and scientific manner. As spectators of the stage, we merely demand that the emotions may be displayed in *their outward effects*, feeling sure, that if this is forcibly accomplished, we shall be sufficiently informed of the emotions at play. We do not need to be explicitly informed by Othello that it is jealousy which he is experiencing. The bearing of this on the Music-Drama is that the *vocal* utterances tell us

more plainly than words the state of mind (emotional) of the actor (personage). The words confirm this by disclosing the surrounding ideas which relate to the emotion. To take an instance, it is hardly conceivable that the first act of *Tristan* could be clear without words, for the foregoing incidents are not performed, but 'related' in the vocal dialogue. No music could narrate to us the distinct events postulated as preceding the rise of the curtain. Words are the means of informing us about the circumstances surrounding the emotions—their cause, that to which they impel, &c. Thus the utterance of "*Tristan*" by Isolde, and "*Isolde*" by Tristan gives us the emotional state in the *vocal tones*, but the *object to which it pertains in the word*. (Cf. Herbert Spencer's statement to the effect that tone of voice is the comment of the feelings upon the propositions of the intellect.)

This reminds us of the relation between Music and the Stage; the vocal tones, together with the strains of the orchestra, give the *expression* of the *emotion*, the *word* gives the *person* to whom it *relates*. The same distinction may be noticed in speech; the emotional state is marked by the *tone* of the voice, but the 'relations' are expounded in the *words*. A simple shriek is indicative of a state of excitement, while the cry 'murder' indicates the *cause* of the excitement, and the name of the assassin indicates a certain person.

To resume then—The intelligibility of speech is based on establishing a mental association between a particular sound, or combination of sounds, and an idea. The mental association ensures that the sound or sounds will excite the idea in the mind of the hearer. Now a somewhat similar device applied to Music extends its capacity for expression almost to the point of speech.

Where the mind has experienced a certain melody in connection with a certain scene to an extent sufficient to impress both upon the mind, there is generated a mental association between the sensations of the melody and of the scene. The recurrence of the melody is likely to excite a represented image of the scene, and *vice versâ*. The underlying principle of *Language* may be utilised to increase the expressiveness of Music by adopting the expedient of the 'leading motive.'

We have seen that the stage furnishes a continual succession of situations attended by the current of Orchestral Music. Hence the possibility is offered of impressing the spectator's mind with a 'situation' in connection with a particular musical phrase. Not only a situation, but also objects and the characters themselves may be thus associated with a musical phrase. Further, if that particular musical phrase be associated with an object or personage throughout the whole representation, it may even play the part of memory, for the recurrence of the musical theme is likely to cause an image of the particular situation, object, person, etc., previously associated therewith to arise in the mind of the spectator. The effect of a 'narrative' by one of the actors might be heightened by employing the same themes in connection with the same situations that the spectators had previously witnessed in preceding scenes upon which the narrative is based.

The process may be carried one step further, by rendering the association more 'inner.' We have spoken of the capricious association of any two sets of sensations, without reference to any *likeness* between the two sets. The mind is not only able to associate sensations, but it is also

keenly sensible to *likeness* among sensations. The larger part of the words (phonetic part) in our language bear no essential likeness to the ideas with which they are arbitrarily linked. But there are some words (especially those relating to objects which have auditory qualities) which are a more or less happy attempt to reproduce the sound which they stand for, or the object to which that sound pertains. Likewise in English 'spelling'; the spelling of some words aspires to phonetic consistency (fidelity), that of others lacks all consistency. The mind is more pleased in associating things which are alike in some respects, than in associating things which bear no likeness whatever to each other. The association between concrete objects and musical phrases might be made more natural if there were some bond of likeness between the two. Happily, the very nature of *Drama* renders this possible.

We have seen that every feature entering into the Music-Drama should be 'motivirt,' that is, it should have its bearing on the progress and outcome of the dramatic action, viz. be emotional in its *effects*, in so far as it is related to the 'inner' Drama. Now we have seen that Music cannot possibly *present* the *visual* aspects of objects. Music does not appeal directly to the eye, how then can it deal directly with the world which affects the eye only?

C5

Referring to the relation of concrete objects on the stage to the Drama itself, we see that each object not only appeals to the eye, but it takes a part in the dramatic development—it is the *cause* of emotions, although it is not itself emotion. Now Music is able to suggest *emotions*, which thus become the connecting link between sensations so unlike as sight and sound. We might say that although Music cannot present a cannon with its barrel and wheels complete, it can present the 'cannon's roar,' and it can further suggest the emotion of terror which the roar may excite in human breasts. Putting the 'cannon's opening roar' aside, and turning to the Music-Drama, we see that by inclusion in a Drama anything may be made an 'emotion-exciter,' and in this guise becomes musically presentable.

The voice cannot reproduce the visual aspects of objects, but may often imitate the audible effects. Putting the 'effect' for the 'cause' is a common feature of Poetry, and the child's designation of a cow as moo-moo is a species of instinctive 'metonymy'—it is an evasion of the impossibility of presenting a visible object vocally. It is also interesting to view the subject from the standpoint of 'symbolism.' The 'fish' is a less obvious symbol than the 'cross' or the 'lamb.' Music cannot possibly reproduce 'fish' or 'cross,' or 'lamb,' but it may suggest the 'inner' nature of Him to whom these symbols relate. This may serve to explain the wonderful part which Music can play in that 'symbolism' which is one of the features of the Music-Drama style. In becoming a symbol, an object becomes an intrinsic part of the drama 'into which it enters'; it also becomes presentable in Music, which then is able to suggest and intensify

that of which the object is a 'symbol.' We can also see why the dramatic style alone allows this mode of treatment. A spear or a cup on the stage are in themselves nothing—they may be mere 'stage belongings,' mere episodes. *As such* they cannot be treated musically (unless rattling or clinking may be called musical). But the moment they become dramatic powers (as in *Parsifal*), exercising an influence on the dramatic events, standing for spiritual powers, they may be musically treated. They appeal to the mind through the eye as 'symbols,' while the ear reveals and enforces that of which they are the symbols—their dramatic import.

This displays again the importance of the 'leading motive,' for the whole expedient of association between an object and a particular phase of music hangs on the persistent recurrence of two together, and this is the distinguishing character of the 'leading motive' as distinguished from any mere recurrent musical phrase.

To see more clearly what is meant by the 'dramatic import' of an object (spear, cup, etc.) we may observe that as soon as the mere 'imitative' method of presenting things musically is renounced, the object may be represented in *many* ways. We have more than one 'leading motive' associated with an object agreeing with its several dramatic aspects. Further, the leading motives of the *same* object may be musically represented in quite a different manner in two different Dramas (compare and contrast the 'spear' in *Parsifal* with the 'spear' in *Siegfried*). This means that the object has become a real 'motif' in the drama, and as such, plays a different part in different dramas, and reveals itself as a multiple working power in one and the same drama even. This is an assurance that the object is not a mere episode, it has become a psychic factor, and it has become a dramatic factor, and as such it may be presented musically in several ways in one and the same drama, and in a different manner in different dramas.

We now recognise the Style of the Music and how the difficulty of presenting the visible world in Music is successfully obviated. It remains to point out how the suggestion of emotion by the leading motive may be made surer, by choosing a musical expression not *capriciously*, but by *fitness* of expression (musical symbolism).

All music which is emotional in its nature may be looked upon as a species of subtle *synecdoche*. Thus in Wagner's method of musical expression the *effect* of an object (sword, etc.) is put for the object itself. This is a common device of poets to make their recitals more vivid. By Music alone, objects which appeal to the eye cannot be represented realistically, but this poetic device of synecdoche enables a composer to escape the danger and gain poetic advantage from his weakness. Objects are not only objects *per se*, but are EMOTION-STIMULATORS as well, hence the emotion stimulated by them may be put *for* them. As Music is a most admirable means of stimulating the *emotions* (or 'suggesting' them) it is therefore

admirably fitted for this subtle kind of *synecdoche* in which the *emotional effect* is put for the *cause* or *object* effecting it. Moreover, all objects in Wagner's Drama are *motives* to *action*, viz. dramatic—viz. they have *particular* powers, virtues, potentialities, etc.

So the 'Cup of the Holy Grail' can be presented musically in this sense, and the 'spear,' which plays such an important symbolical part in *Parsifal*.

To observe the power of 'association' in the Music-Drama we may refer to a case from an opera. Say a musical phrase occurs to my mind which I do not recognise immediately, I try to put my mind in a perfectly neutral condition, and then 'thinking of the melody' will often arouse a picture of the whole stage with the *scene* which was impressed on my mind in *connection* with the given melody.

Hence we see how the 'leading-motive' may explain itself whenever it *recurs* after having been heard associated with some striking scene, etc.

Moreover, the 'Style' of the Music-Drama would develop in time what is now undeveloped,—our sensitiveness to such associations—develop our sensibility to the emotional suggestiveness of Music.

The musical motives of *Tristan* display psychic phenomena and not physical phenomena. Although a motive may be associated with some tangible or physical object, yet the spirit of the motive itself is the *psychic effect* of this object. This is the 'subjectivity' of Wagner's motives which is seemingly belied when the leading motives are named by some such term as *Tristan-motiv* or *Loge-motiv* in digests or analyses of his works. In all these cases the Music paints the *emotion* of some actor or actors in the Drama; it does not attempt the impossible, viz. to paint *concrete objects*. This is a point that is so often overlooked. A careful examination of *Tristan* will show that the 'themes' express or suggest *emotions*.

D A theme may relate to an object and yet be varied to fit the different *emotions* of different situations. Thus the 'variations' of motives are not mere formal variations dictated by a 'fashion,' a tradition of composers, but spring from the psychical moods themselves; it is the change of mood (sad, joyful, thoughtful, etc.) which governs or causes a variation in the mood of a 'leading motive.'

Compare the striking manner in which the 'churchly' motive in Tannhäuser's narrative, act iii., undergoes a variation from the point—"Da jauchzt es auf in brünstigem Frohlocken" to the words "Da erkelte mich der holde Sang." So compare the phases of Siegfried's bugle motive—free, naïve, joyful in its simple form; solemn, sad, full of import of fate in *funeral march* (*Götterdämmerung*).

This may account for the possibility of Wagner's composing so *much* Music. The variations were dictated by the dramatic tone of the several situations in which the particular theme occurred.

A very forcible change or 'variation' (*Götterdämmerung*, act iii. Trauermarsch) is effected by taking the theme of *Siegfried* (played by a single horn in *quick tempo*) and giving it a very broad, rich *instrumentation* (harmonisation), and reducing the tempo and changing the rhythm to fit it for the changed expression. In this way themes are wonderfully altered in 'narratives' to fit to the sentiments or mood of the narrator. (Cf. *Götterdämmerung*, act i. sc. 2, narrative of Waltraute.)

A difficulty presents itself—how may concrete objects play a part in the Music-Drama when in its nature it is not to be concrete but subjective



viz. *emotional*. The whole question is solved from the standpoint of 'fitness.' The 'stage' as it appeals to the eye is *necessarily* concrete. The emotional side is relegated to Music which *cannot be concrete*. Symbolism then performs its function, in that it *presents* to the *eye* an object which is symbolical of the inner emotions concerned in the drama. Such an object as a cup cannot be presented by Music, but such a 'cup' as that which is associated with the Last Supper *can* be presented in Music by presenting the sentiments of which it is a mere material symbol. The Music-Drama appeals therefore in the most fitting manner to the eye and the ear—to the first by visible objects, to the ear by invisible Music. It works upon the mind through two avenues, placing simple objects before the eye, and explaining their spiritual import through the ear. If the mind is not reached through the duplicate explanation it would hardly be reached by any means. Everyday observation shows how inveterately the mind is bound to the visually concrete, and hence how powerful an instrument symbolism is. The mind craves something material on which to mature its faith. The crucifix and symbolical pictures persist long after idolatry has passed away. But while in religion the device of symbolism is only a bridge to the purely abstract, in Art it finds a lasting application. In this it is important that the symbolism should not be purely conventional, it should be as naturally evident as possible.

C5

The musician really makes a *myth* of the whole of the world in that he expresses all objects by their *effects* on the human mind. He is a real poet in that he makes 'man a measure of all things.' To him *objective* reality is nothing compared with our *sensations* of this objective reality—our feelings in the presence of terrestrial objects, not what the things of nature may be as cold objects in themselves, but what they become in that warm room of inner man. This *effect* of the object (sword, spear, etc.) on the human being he puts *for the cause*, and thus employs a most effective device of poets—the figure of speech termed *synecdoche*. Wagner does more than this. By his '*dramatic action*' he is enabled to put not only the epical effect of an object but its *dramatical* effect—for his objects (spear, ring) or attributes become real *motives*, and influence the higher part of man's feelings—his *affections*. Moreover, an object may then have several aspects and be so pictured by the musician, these aspects being the *different* effects which the object has upon *different minds* or at *different* times. Thus there are several 'motives' which group themselves about the "ring" in the *Trilogy*.

The main point to grasp is that the expressive powers of Music require a *dramatic* action for their 'style,' for in the severe dramatic action all episode is excluded, and every person and every object (spear, sword, ring, etc.) entering into the action becomes an '*emotion-excitant*'—and hence may be presented musically, for this *emotional effect* may be put for its *cause* according to the device of *synecdoche*. There are thousands of objects

in Nature which we are *indifferent* to, and which consequently would baffle musical presentation, but in the artificially weeded DRAMA the Style excludes these indifferent objects, and what objects or persons occur are MOTIVATED, viz. they have *their influence* in shaping the course of the play; and hence have an effect on the emotions of the actors which is *designedly great*. By employing a *dramatic* Style, and not the epical, the *expressive* powers of Music are *greatly enlarged*.

The potion in *Tristan* becomes the symbol of irresistible love (one of the chief dramatic motives of this tragedy) instead of a mere episode such as a drug would be. So the Ring in *Nibelungen* (desire for wealth) and the Cup in *Parsifal* (even the wound gets its symbolical meaning). Compare also *Spring* in *Walküre* and *Night* in *Tristan*.

Likewise a *character* motive naturally bears a relation to the rôle played by the character in the work. Thus Wotan is 'power' or 'power of justice' both in the play and in the Music.

Isolde becomes musically 'the intensely longed for'; Kundry, the wild, passionate, restless, untamed, &c.

As some one has remarked *à propos* of 'personal themes' viz.: those attaching themselves to the characters; they are not a musical 'chain and balls' which the characters are compelled to *drag about with them* wherever they go, announcing their advent on the stage by a rattling of their shackles. Personally, I am convinced of the inexpediency of approaching one of Wagner's works with the mind loaded with musical algebra in the form of leading motives all cut and dried, and named and numbered and genetically arranged. *Æsthetic* enjoyment of the works as performed is very liable to be thereby replaced by a sort of musical calisthenics, which, pleasing as it may be, is *not the pleasure* intended by the composer-poet. On his side, the composer should be very careful not to draw too severely upon the *memory* of the auditor for the past occurrence of themes and their circumstances. If the recurrence of a theme calls up an image of a past situation in the auditor's mind of its *own accord*, all right; but there is a great difference for the enjoyment of the Music-Drama between this spontaneous resurrection of images and the voluntary and conscious committing to memory of musical themes and their accompanying circumstances for future reference. It is not a matter of what Music *can* express, but of what it probably *will* suggest under ordinary circumstances. The reminiscient function of the leading motive method of composing must be very temperately exercised. It has been much praised for its ability in the matter of expressing the *arrière-pensées* of the characters, but knowledge of the actual and unaffected results in this use may show that very much care is necessary lest the composer abuse its use, for he is very liable not to look at his total work from the standpoint of the uninitiated *spectator* at every moment.

All of Wagner's reforms and innovations are open to abuse, and there

will not be wanting in the future perhaps some Meyerbeer of the thematic method who will not only out-do Wagner but the 'audience of the future' as well.

The *arrière-pensée* tends to prevent the stage from displaying that purely 'presentative' character, which is emphasised by *C* and *D*.

One of the most praiseworthy movements of Wagner towards reconstruction was the exaltation of the orchestra to an importance worthy of its capabilities. The orchestra had been improperly, unduly, subordinated to the human voice. A feature of the Italian orchestra which becomes most cloying is the tingle-tangle accompaniment of the songs, and especially the part which prepares the way for the footlight rhapsodist—tum-te-te, tum-tee-tee, etc.

The orchestra accompanying the Wagnerian Dramas is endowed with all the capabilities of rendering the most advanced symphonic Music. Moreover, the superiority of the orchestra over the human voice in rendering absolute Music is recognised. This change may be looked upon either as an exaltation of the orchestra or as the subordination of the human voice; in any case it is simply a recognition of the proper powers or capabilities of the two instruments. The voice is differentiated as an organ for the conveyance of the definite ideas embodied in the words of the text.

B

C3 a

## 7. VOCAL STYLE.

The Vocal Style is one of the most difficult parts of the Music-Drama to determine. It is the *meeting-point* between the Music which is *per force idealistic* and the Drama which requires the dialogue to present some of the aspects of dialogue in real life. This is the crucial position.

On the one hand it may be represented by formal *song*, on the other by speech almost. Which is most fitted to the *Style*? Is there no other alternative? These are problems proposed by this section.

*B* (A) Vocal Style proscribes all those shrieks and other *noises* which the naturalistic actors attempt to introduce into the performance for self-laudation. They are thrillingly effective because they work upon nerves rendered very sensitive by being deeply engrossed in the music, but for that very reason they are inexcusable.

Tannhäuser offers several opportunities of this kind which are seized upon by unscrupulous singers and used with great effect, but not that effect proper to the style of an art-work of which Music is an essential feature. Compare the use of firearms and acting.

*B* *B* condemns any purely conventional Style such as *recitative secco*, etc., for the reasons that it lacks Beauty in itself, and that it becomes disgusting by its musically monotonous repetition. Moreover, conventional recitative is condemned by *C2*, and by *D* and *C4*, since it stands too much apart from the Style of the rest of the work. The division into 'spoken' dialogue and 'sung' dialogue is very little less harmonious than the severe division into recitative and songs. We are instantly and unpleasantly sensible of the change from the 'song' to the barren and monotonous recitative, and *vice versa*. A work thus divided lacks harmony, it lacks Style. Further, such contrasts are inconsistent with the nature of dialogue in general, which does not display such sudden and complete changes. Even the aria itself (like the recitative) is liable to lack Beauty from the conventionality of its form. Not every one is pleased by the preparatory tum—tum, tum—tum, tum—tum of the orchestra. They suggest a lack of sincerity in their artificiality, and their cut and dried musical manner prevents their suggesting real-felt emotion.

*C2*, *C3*, and *C4* condemn very many important features of the 'opera seria.' The unpleasant interruption of the flow of the dialogue by the division into recitative and song has been already mentioned. The 'aria,' the 'concerted pieces' (formal trios, quartettes, etc.) and vocal display (floriture). These all stand apart from the Drama in such an obtrusive manner that it is threatened with temporary paralysis with each 'number.' *C2* & *C4* The Drama is, as it were, left behind to take care of itself, while the

actors (temporarily become singers) display their respective talents to the audience over the footlights. The obtrusive display of vocal execution (as that of the *prima donna*, for instance) is the most reprehensible feature of an Opera which pretends to dramatic seriousness, for it not only completely interrupts the progress of the Drama, by prostituting the spectator's attention, but it stamps the actor with utter insincerity. To any one who has feeling for serious Drama, such a complete revelation of insincerity is abominable. The capers of a 'ballet' in the middle of a church scene are not more sacrilegious than this taking in vain of our sympathies, aroused at the sorrow or anguish of a character. It is all the more heartless from the dry and conventional musical nature of the 'runs' and 'shakes' in which the hero or heroine indulges. The same holds of repetition and chopping up of words and phrases.

C 2

C 2

C 4

This applies particularly to *Operas*, many of which aggravate the insincerity by the fact that they propose the outer aspects of our everyday life, and not an idealistic setting. Nothing, to my mind, so strongly indicates the essential connection possible between Music and feelings as its capacity for affecting us as intensely *insincere*.

Fioriture was so palpably false to many dramatic situations—that is, it immediately suggested to the mind a *display* of vocal expertness, instead of expression of feeling. In it, the human voice is forced in a direction which is unnatural to it, for the voice is not an instrument which most naturally takes to rapidity and difficulty of execution—its physical mode of producing the notes is *not* like the keyed piano, each tone has to be *made* (formed), not simply blown or struck. The truest field and situation for the voice is the expression of emotions, since the voice is employed for that naturally, and it has the character of belonging to a human being more than any instrument. The voice essentially belongs to a human being. Fioriture springs from an impulse directly opposed to deep feeling—the impulse to gain applause by the display of clever management of voice. It may not be beautiful even, it need only call forth wonderment. Thus we recognise the 'reason' why vocal display makes itself so instantly felt as insincere where it proposes to express deep feeling.

E

It may be reasonably doubted if a composer shows feeling for the voice, as a musical instrument, in proposing such rapid passages for execution. The equation between an instrument and what it plays generally requires that the Music should be that kind most peculiar to the particular kind of instrument, and that which can be performed with moderate difficulty. Now, rapid passages are not peculiar to the voice—so far as rapidity is concerned it is excelled by several instruments. Nor is execution easily attained in the case of the voice. Years of hard training are required to press the voice in a direction for which its organ is not fitted. The type of instrument pre-eminently fitted for display of execution is the piano, with its 'wire to each note,' and a key-board worthy of the

C 4  
C 3 a

rapid typewriter. However, we do not need to cite 'reason' to define the nature of the piano. The same thing is shown by the style of the compositions for the instrument as dictated by artistic feeling. The 'cadenza' points to the 'professional' scope allowed. A striking confirmation of the fact that display of expressive ability is inconsistent with sincere feeling, is given by the instinctive repugnance we feel towards vocal display in music fitted to the sacredness of the church service. (Cf. a rendering of the 'Creed,' by a church choir, with elaborate musical ornamentation, interruptions, repetitions, etc.)

Dance rhythm is a wholly foreign feature when tacked on to the Music-Drama for arias, etc. A 'waltz song' can hardly be emotional. In Operas its use often suggests frivolity.

Wagner was fortunate in his talent for inventing an original form of musical declamation, for only by this means could he get free from the modern world of Music as he had gotten free of the modern world of appearance by his recourse to the myth. In other words, Wagner was forced to an 'ideal' dramatic world in myth, to get away from modern aspects of life, and he was also obliged to invent a new Style of musical diction in order to free his Music from the modern taints of the 'Opera' Style which would have degraded his otherwise 'ideal' Dramas to the level of the *real*. We can hardly conceive how ordinary and un-ideal *Rheingold* or *Siegfried* would be if the musical style did not differ from that of *Traviata* or *Romeo and Juliet*.

One of the respects in which *Lohengrin* is most admirable is that Wagner put life and beauty into the recitative by his rich orchestral accompaniment. He took the orchestral Music in its developed form due to its independent development after differentiating itself from vocal Music; and with this independent orchestra he reformed a dry Art—he made dry recitative forcible, interesting, and beautiful.

(Cf. Vocal strangeness of Erda's declamatory recitative; not monotonous, like 'melodic' dialogue. A broad style pervades the whole as contrasted with the thinness of 'one line' Music.)

The vocal style of Wagner's works may be viewed as the necessary outcome of the intention to make a Drama of maximum expressiveness and beauty.

A form of vocal recitative was needed which would not compel the grand 'instrumental' organism to meekly and rapidly follow some singer's voice. The vocal part could not take an independent course and compel the orchestra to adapt itself to its course. For the force and unity of instrumental Music it was necessary that it should flow in its full, broad, stream with the power of a symphony, as if displaying the human character which underlies expression.

Already in *Lohengrin* we see a very remarkable differentiation of the vocal parts from the orchestra. The two elements are entwined, but each is independent. This is important in connection with Wagner's later development of the orchestra as an expression of the emotions concerned, so that the melody is completely transferred to the orchestra, and the voice sings notes which are exceedingly effective in connection with the orchestra, but completely lack that dependent sequence which is termed vocal melody. It is wholly unfit that two such different 'organs' (instruments) as the human voice and the orchestra should be compelled to follow one single track.

The vocal style of the Opera may be viewed as an outcome of the accompaniment of the voice by a single instrument (like the harp, or the spinet, cf. Bach's recitative), so that after the orchestra had expanded itself it was still shunted into the position of a harp or guitar with reference to the voice.

The vocal dialogue of Wagner's mature, (later) works, is marked musically by the absence of that rhythm and progression by formal intervals which characterise an operatic style. It is not necessary to give instances—in fact, it is probable that very much of the

aforetime aversion to Wagner's works arose from the failure of the vocal part to satisfy that 'expectancy' formed by familiarity with operatic melody.

The foregoing introduces us to the dramatic fault of 'recitative,' the aria, and formal concerted pieces; it is not only that the recitative is so tiresomely conventional that it can never seem sincere and expressive of emotion, but, also, the very fact that the *introduction* of such features as 'arias,' duets, etc., in an opera, has become such a conventional (commercial) process, that they are felt to be musical 'pieces' (divisions) rather than outpourings of the emotions. We seem to feel that the introduction of an aria or concerted piece marks one of those regular opportunities which the musician seizes to assert his absolute despotism and force all feeling and dramatic action off the stage, until he has exhausted his lyrical resources, and then retires with a flourish to his refuge of recitative. It makes no difference how beautiful an 'aria' or duet may be, so long as it is *felt to be an aria or duet*, it cannot appear as an expression of the emotions of the character or characters before us. 'Composition,' felt as such by the hearer, suggests a 'composer' and makes the actor a 'singer' of it. That we may intensely believe in the emotions of a character, requires that her vocal utterances should seem to be directly impelled from her by her emotions, and not that they are compositions which she has merely learned to repeat. Here we get a clear insight into the lack of feeling which anything conventional (like recitative) suggests; it is because, in being conventional, *it cannot spring from the personal emotion of the singer*, its origin is *external* to the singer. Now the aria, duet, etc., are conventional features which have their place in the realm of independent music, and hence are related to the personal emotions of the characters as the cold formalities of etiquette are related to our real feelings. Just as the naturalistic Drama, formulated by unmusical dramatists, was forced upon Music by the libretto-makers, so the formalities of absolute music have been forced on Drama by musical specialists.

This leads us to the consideration of the importance of the words in the Music-Drama (cf. C'). In the 'Opera,' the dramatic element was so often subordinated to the Music, that it did not matter much whether the words were understood or not. This was naïvely shown in the rapturous way in which operas sung in Italian were applauded by persons to whom Italian was a closed letter.

The pursuit of dramatic force in the Music-Drama requires that the text should be of importance, and hence the understanding of the words important for the audience. This means that distinctness of enunciation must mark the vocal style of the Music-Drama. The words are not (as often in the Opera and songs) mere vexatious obstacles to the composer, which might pardonably be replaced by *do, re, mi*, so far as the audience is concerned.

C 4  
D

E

C 4

E

D  
C 2C 4  
& D  
C 4

The composer should be able to fuse words and music together, and the singer should be able to make his audience appreciate his words as well as enjoy his tones. A style of vocal declamation is required which needs practice as conscientious as that devoted to the 'runs' and 'shakes' of the operatic school. To be assured of this, one has only to listen to mediocre performances of Wagner's works; the words of whole portions  
*C2* are indistinguishable, and the effort required often causes the hearer to give up trying to understand and devote his attention to the Music alone.  
*C3* Or he may hear the opposite fault of a singer who declaims (often shrieks) the sentences, and leaves the tones and rhythm, and harmony of orchestra to the hearer to decipher. The art of musical declamation is not to be learned in a day. Conscientious training of the vocal organs is required, and how much grander the end is than that of the mere display of skill in rendering passages of doubtful sweetness, with the aid of some vowel-sound merely. The beautiful feature of the human voice, which places  
*C3a* it above any speechless instrument of the orchestra, is that it is capable, not only of pleasant tones, but also of living speech. (A school is needed, cf. Baireuth, p. 142.)

*E* The composer will cultivate a sensitiveness to those modes of passionate and tender expression that ordinary life displays, and will embody the results in his vocal declamation. It will no longer be considered as all sufficient for the Music-Drama to be able to compose a smooth-running melody for the human voice. In connection with this possible development of a style of musical dialogue, it is interesting to read an essay by Herbert Spencer, "The Function of Music," of which the following sentences bear more or less upon the foregoing. "Vocal sounds are produced by the agency of certain muscles. . . . The muscles in common with the body at large are excited to contraction by pleasurable and painful feelings, and therefore it is that feelings demonstrate themselves in sounds as well as in movements. . . . Variations of voice are the physiological results of variations of feelings, loudness, quality or timbre, pitch, intervals and rate of variation." The following also: "Musical genius is shown in achieving the decorative Beauty without losing the beauty of emotional meaning" (cf. p. 39). Just as the actor observes the various bodily effects of the feelings and applies that knowledge, so the composer of the Music-Drama might attain a much higher agreement between Music and feelings by a sensitiveness to the way in which the voice is affected by the feelings in everyday life, and apply this to his composing, but from a musical standpoint always, of course. It has even been suggested that much of instrumental music is but the sublimation of those audible modes of expressing the emotions that have become unconsciously registered upon the mind during its long converse with the environment in the past. However this may be, it is undoubtedly true that musicians have invented some quite remarkable ways of suggesting modes of feeling,



and it is hardly reasonable to suppose that the past victories in this matter have exhausted the field. It is conceivable that a much finer sense of musical expression might become developed.

The vocal declamation of Wagner's style does not require such rapidity of rhythm as those operas which are founded on strict melody and *fioriture* effects, but it *does* require the accuracy of *tone*, for in the 'enharmonic' progression of Wagner's instrumental style the progressions are frequently very *subtle*, and hence require the greatest care in their rendering, lest the effect be muddly or clouded. A false vocal tone can 'cloud' a whole progression.

The singer must remember that the Music-Drama is *musical* before all, although not in the narrow sense of commonplace vocal melody. He may not tamper with the music as he might with the enunciation of phrases in the spoken Drama. Vocal dialogue may be said to be more '*obligato*,' than spoken dialogue: it may not be hurried and retarded at will, nor can the pitch be capriciously chosen. The rhythmical beat of the orchestra is inexorable, and a false vocal tone may ruin several 'chords.' The difference between the Style of the Music-Drama and the Drama may be said to consist in the *measured* character of the former as compared with the latter. The music marches along with a tread which pervades every part—vocal music, action, acting, all is '*obligato*.' 'Interpretation' in the sense of meddling with the tempo, and rhythm, and pitch on the part of the singer, is out of the question in the Music-Drama. The singer cannot, like the actor, allow himself to be 'carried away' by his feelings; many singers of Wagner's works do so, some for the renommé which such a display of 'dramatic feeling' evokes from the audience, others merely because they have not grasped the 'measured' style which the Music-Drama should display, and hence attempt to vie with the actor in a play, forgetting that the superiority of the Music-Drama lies in its musical and statuesque character, not in coarse dramatic realism.

First musical, and then dramatic. This should be the rule for rendition, however much the rule may be reversed in the *acquisition* of the vocal part.

Music is either pleasing or it is exasperating. A 'chord' is either a 'chord,' or it is not pleasing; even a 'discord' must be a particular and distinct 'discord' or it will not make the impression it should. Strangely enough, this is often not felt by orchestras even, which will take great care in intonation with respect to chords, but act very carelessly in the rendering of discords. I have heard many performances of some of Wagner's works, in which neither could the words of certain singers be understood, nor was the intonation tolerable. No wonder Wagner has gotten a very bad name.

For twenty who can perform a tune over the footlights, there is not one that can carry out the scene of the announcement of death to Siegmund by Brünhilde with the perfect repose befitting the solemn occasion, and with

the vocal smoothness and perfect intonation necessary to the musical side of the scene. It is amazing how many sing 'by note' without any feeling whatever for the harmony of which their own tones form a part, and that for weal or woe. I have had occasion at times to be most indignant at the carelessness of singers in this respect in spoiling the calm beauty and solemnity of the above scene. All tends to show that the requirements for singers participating in the Music-Drama should be much higher than for the average opera in the matter of *feeling for harmony*.

There are many singers who can carry out a tune with security, and yet fail when it becomes a matter of taking a series of notes forming part of a series of harmonic changes. The trouble is that in singing, the human voice has to *form its own tones*, not simply to press a key as in the case of many instruments. Hence, what is needed is an ear keenly sensitive to harmony and a corresponding delicacy in the formation of vocal tones. A singer who is oblivious to the fact that he is flattening or sharpening, is worse than useless for the purposes of the Music-Drama. A singer ought to feel, not only the tone he is singing, but also the chord of which it is a part and the harmonic progressions of which the chords are a part.

C<sub>3</sub> The subordination of the vocal part is a part of functional differentiation of the various parts of the Music-Drama.

D The orchestra is superior to the voice in the rendition of pure *Music* of all kinds. On the other hand, the human voice can do what the orchestra cannot—convey definite ideas through language. The orchestra, therefore, C<sub>2</sub> is most properly relegated to the function of presenting the musical part; C<sub>3a</sub> the voice to the presentation of the dialogue. This relation between voice and orchestra is the very opposite of that in the Opera, where the voice posed as the carrier of the musical part, and the orchestra sank to a mere accompaniment. Under such circumstances the orchestra could hardly perform its function of emotion-suggestant. (Of the great advance in the capabilities of the orchestra, Mozart, Beethoven, etc.)

Wagner's orchestral Style is one highly differentiated from a vocal Style.

The traditional 'vocal' periods linger long in the Art—a broad, deep Style such as was possible with highly-developed instruments, waited long for recognition.

C<sub>2</sub> Formal vocal melody calls too much attention to itself, and hence violently interrupts the progress of the drama. The aria also is inconsistent with the expression of the emotions; it is too uniform in movement and harmonic progression, too unimpulsive, too formal, especially in connection with its musical and literary '*repetitions*.' Musically the aria solicits attention to its musical form.

D In Wagner's later works attention must be directed to the orchestral music and less to the mere vocal melody. Listening has to be practised a little in order to get rid of that artificial mode of listening to the *vocal* part only which has become natural to us from a long converse with the Opera. It will often be found that persons who do not enjoy Wagner's Music do not enjoy Beethoven's either. A good training for getting rid of the above-mentioned vice of listening to the voice only, is to hear Beethoven's symphonies frequently and seriously.

Wagner is strictly lyrical *when the occasion calls for it*. Cf. the play of emotions attending the meeting of Tristan and Isolde, and *Lohengrin*, act iii. sc. 2. The mood of

love is such as to make 'songs' natural, but hatred and thirst for gold are brooding moods which are best worked out in sober recitative.

There is nothing which proscribes a 'song' if the occasion, viz. 'situation,' calls for it. Cf. Mime's 'Lullaby' song and the 'Schmiede' song of Siegfried; Chorus in Temple in *Parsifal*; *Tannhäuser*, ii. 3; *Meistersinger*.

Take the love-duet in *Tristan* for instance. If the whole scene be ideal and does not suggest the outer aspects of everyday life, much liberty can be taken with the Style of the Music as regards concerted vocal Music. This point I have frequently referred to, and deem very important.

The fault of the Opera (cf. *Traviata*) was not that chorus and duets occurred so much, as that they did not occur in situations which called for them, or in a musical style that was consistent, and above all they were inconsistent with the naturalistic situations proposed. Compare the chorus (as viewed) in *Parsifal* and *Traviata* respectively. A chorus of gentlemen in dress suits in a dramatic situation is the height of stylistic absurdity.

So long as the conditions demanded by *A* and *B* are satisfied, the chorus and duet are not necessarily subversive of the Style of the Music-Drama. But if these are not fulfilled, and if the chorus does not coincide with the expression of a *general* emotion felt, but seeks to give information (cf. *Otello*, Verdi, iii. 2) in which the words *ought* to be understood, but cannot be (contrast the conditions in the chorus scenes in *Parsifal*), the situation is not a lyrical one and concerted music is not demanded. The fault of the duet in the Opera often was not that it was a duet, but that whereas the situation called for an expression of pure and sincere emotions, the music of the duet suggested the utter prostitution of the feelings to the desire to display dexterity of throat. This is an important point, and should be carefully verified by the reader from auditions of various works. It was the heart-hypocrisy of the music in connection with a situation of pure feeling (love-duet) that disgusted so thoroughly. In Verdi's *Otello*, though it does not fully satisfy the conditions *A* and *B*, there is nevertheless nothing repulsive about the love scene and its duet with which the first act closes. But cause Othello and Desdemona to indulge in *conventional vocal flourishes* for pure display, and the whole scene would become heartless in its lack of sincerity of expression. (Cf. *Tristan*, ii. 2, 'O guck hernieder,' etc.)

Wagner's vocal style is characterised by an effectiveness in the choice of the notes of the singer in respect to the symphony which the orchestra is executing at the same time. The 'narrative' of *Tannhäuser* contains many instances of wonderfully chosen notes for the voice as related to the orchestral part. The voice accentuates and clarifies the changes of chords of the orchestra by taking the most peculiar notes of the chord with relation to the chord just left. So the intervals in Ortrud's part, *Lohengrin*, ii. 1.

There is an advantage gained by renouncing formal melody for the voice, and thereby gaining originality without effort, for by scoring the voice with the same freedom as one would the horn or any other instrument, a very large choice of notes is allowed, determined only by the

harmony. Wagner thus greatly broadened the field of lyric expression both musically and dramatically. It really opens up a new road in composition for the voice. Notice the beauty of the vocal recitative in some parts, and its sturdy force in other parts. This vocal style is new and startling in its effects. (Cf. the parts of the three Fates, *Götterdämmerung*, i. 1, and that of Hagen-Gutrune for the extreme beauty and freshness of a musical score (partitur) founded on the interweaving of *themes*, instead of successive songs.)

C3 Wagner's works call for a real musical taste in rendition, not for mere vocal dexterity, but a feeling for accurate intonation and precise rhythm. The subtle changes of key require the greatest care on the part of the singer lest their effect be completely ruined by the flattening or sharpening of a note, especially as the voice is no longer the ruler of the orchestra, and the vocal melody no longer a mere catchy phrase. (Cf. *waltz* songs.) While the Wagnerian style calls for less *floriture*, it calls for a higher musical capacity in grasping the harmonic progressions, and in recalling the vocal part (including *words*). C3 The importance of *rhythm* results from the important position of the orchestra; it being no longer a threadbare tum, tum, tum, any discrepancy between the voice and the orchestra tends to ruin the effect of both. It is no longer so easy to keep voice and orchestra together, or rather it is more disastrous if they do not keep together. The guitar-like thrumming of the old orchestra was so insignificant beside the display of talents by the prima donna, that it did not matter so much if both were not engaged with the same bar at the same time. Moreover, a little acceleration or retardation of the thrumming was easily managed. In Wagner's vocal style rhythmical disagreement between voice and C3 orchestra means also harmonic disagreement. Resolutions (of one chord into another) occur which are so subtle and out of the ordinary as to be completely ruined by any insecurity or wavering in voice or orchestra.

C2 There are three reasons why the vocal declamation should express the *present* emotions of the singer; in case he *relates* anything, he suggests the inconsistency of employing song rather than *speech*; in 'relating' anything, he calls for too much intellectual work on the part of the spectator already absorbed by the vocal and instrumental Music; vocal Music is E always unnatural unless it be related to the singer as the expression of his Cf. immediate emotions. Even in a play, we sometimes feel the unnatural- Situation ness of the initiatory by-figures (the servant, valet, or the maid) whose function it is to inform us of the *status* of affairs up to the opening of the drama. We also have the same feeling—that the speaker is talking to *us*—when an actor *soliloquises* some unemotional remark over the footlights. An unemotional soliloquy in recitative savours of the ridiculous—we feel how utterly *de trop* the *Music* is, how foreign to the situation, how easily A it might be dispensed with to the betterment of the situation.

## 8. ACTING (STYLE OF).

This is an important factor in compelling the spectator to feel what the Style of the Music-Drama is, by making him feel *what it* proposes to be and what it *does not* propose to be.

It in itself largely stamps the Music-Drama as different from the thrilling 'Melodrama,' seemingly so victorious on the modern stage. The acting is one of the most unique features of the Style, and since it appeals directly to the eye is likely to impress the average spectator from the very beginning. He will be likely to miss that rushing about the stage and nervous inability to stand still and wait which he himself experiences in his anxiety for 'something to happen.' He (or she) is liable to be entirely oblivious to the fact that something *is* happening in the orchestra every moment which he (or she) might enjoy, but for this modern expectancy, this nervous craving for the death of some one or other of the personæ either by natural catastrophe or premeditated design. The Drama tends to overlap (see p. 87) the Music-Drama both in the case of the spectators and of the actors who seem to have an 'expectancy' established in them for being required *to do something* which leads them to look embarrassed when not actively engaged in manslaughter, and to *over-do* it when they are. It is strange that people who are quite contented to sit quietly and enjoy a symphony, will complain of a lack of something to occupy the mind when the *whole apparatus* of the stage, scenic, histrionic, and literary, is *added to the symphony*. It seems to indicate that the most vivid point of departure of the Music-Drama and independent Drama is in the Style of the *acting*.

In this connection it is interesting to note what stress Wagner (in his theoretical writings) lays upon the 'dance,' by which he understands gesture in general, including facial expression, and with ancient Greece always in sight. The reader may find it worth while to attempt to form a vivid conception of the 'dance' among the ancient Greeks, and to contrast it with a modern dance such as the waltz.

It is not only that the movements of the two would appear very different to a spectator: it is that the *spirit* in which they are performed is quite different. The application to the Music-Drama is that it should approximate in its spirit more to our idea of the ancient dance, with its slow measured movement than to the waltz with its giddy restlessness and element of sex. This may serve to make clear what is meant by the *general tempo* of the Music-Drama as contrasted with the sensational Melodrama or the acrobatic performances of the ballet. *Observe the figures of Greek Sculpture*, especially those that are not 'doing anything.'

*Repose.*—The *tempo* of the Music-Drama is much *slower* than that of

*A B*  
*C 3*

the independent Drama. It partakes of the *measured* character of the Music which makes the influence of its presence felt on all the other factors of the Music Dramas. Instead of rapid speech we have (comparatively) slow *recitative*—all is *extended*—there is no attempt at hurry—the pace of the acting must be rather a dignified walk than a race for life. The canon of Beauty prescribes Beauty of action as well as of position, and the actions will be far more *measured* than the same actions would be in everyday life, where no audience is to have its sense of Beauty satisfied. The Style of the acting will not be exactly natural—it will be artificial in that it will be more beautiful (grace- and repose-ful) than the corresponding actions in everyday life. The object of the Music-Drama is not to show us everyday life, but to show us something as beautiful as the artist can conceive and execute inside the limits of the Art. *A*, *B*, and *C* all prescribe this. Here, again, the reader must be referred to Sculpture, in order to get an idea of the spirit of the proper Style of acting in the Music-Drama. The Music-Drama does not call for such subtle, complex, or minute employment of mimic as independent Drama.

*C 1* Facial expression, when too much resorted to for effect, is liable to become unduly subtle, and to encourage the use of the opera-glass for its detailed divination; against this see protest, p. 132. Gesture is a much broader means of expression, where the mind of the observer is assailed by a multiplicity of *stimuli*.

*A & B* From this it will be seen that the Music-Drama ought to be conceived *ab initio*, not only in a pictorial spirit but also in a *sculpturesque* spirit. This in itself precludes any naturalistic conception. We see here again that the fault of the Opera was not in its being 'artificial,' but rather in its not being artificial enough. While very artificial in some respects, it was not artificial in all respects, and the lack of unity between the two features was very distressing. At the same time that the Opera disclosed the highly artificial situation of musical dialogue, it posed as an imitation of the outer aspects of our everyday life, and attempted to work the same thrilling effect that a play of a naturalistic nature would work. The point to be grasped is that just as long as the proposal is "to be naturalistic," just so long will the critical faculties condemn any definite pursuit of the beautiful in acting or other features. One familiar with 'Opera' performances will recall instances. (*A*) proscribes the uneasy style of acting which is imitated from our nervous life, and (with *B*) prescribes acting which is replete with *repose*. Slow movements, executed so that every part of the movement will appear pleasing, nobler, and less violent. Of course this does not refer to the postures and movements of characters not designed to be dignified or beautiful. Cf. *Alberich* and *Mime*.

The *toga*, and not the business man's 'sack' coat, should determine the action. Nervous, exaggerated acting is out of place. (*B*) prescribes a style which is more *beautiful* than that we see in everyday life, or in

Dramas which aim to imitate that life. There should be an intentional striving on the part of the actor to make his *postures* and *actions* as beautiful to the eye as possible—he should put himself in the posture of a *living statue*, and seek to make every aspect of himself *sculpturesque*. Flightiness is not consistent (*repose*). Melodrama is not fitting.

The reasons why the acting can thus differ from that of the recited Drama are these:—(1) Music-Drama does not propose to imitate actions of everyday life; (2) Music-Drama does not strive to attain the sole effect of the dramatic thrill; (3) Music requires attention for its enjoyment, therefore the acting should not be so conspicuous as to monopolise attention; (4) Music being present serves to occupy the mind much of the time that would have to be spent in doing something in the recited Drama; (5) all is more measured in Music-Drama (cf. Musical Dialogue as contrasted with speech in matter of rapidity). In fact, the dignity of carriage and repose, and beauty of action may require a school of training quite as well as the vocal style, and is likely to be a revelation to one seeing it for the first time. Singers are very likely to fall into the style of acting of the ordinary stage, and very frequently act without any repose whatever. This is probably partly due to their not being ‘old hands’ at acting, and consequently lacking in coolness and, perhaps, also because having a much greater task than the ordinary tragedian, they suffer from the momentary excitement arising from the task of remembering, and are easily ‘carried away’ by the intensity of the musical expression. It is probably in the *acting* more than anything, that the Music-Drama departs from that which we associate with ‘romantic.’ There is no call for allowing the Music-Drama to relapse into the weak sentimental any more than into the excitable. It was fortunate for Wagner’s reform movement that the Scandinavian myths suggested a *sturdy* type of character, and that the action in his works is often in the hands of the gods, with whom we naturally associate a ‘measured’ movement and mind.

Wagner’s ‘lengths.’ When the intervals are as long as they are in Bayreuth, and when the declamation can be understood as it is there, there is not so much reason for complaining. We attempt to hear his works under wrong conditions. Just as Wagner shows his comprehension of the qualities of the human senses in his mixture of the less pleasing music with the more pleasing, so that the senses may not become palled with an over-amount of sweetness, so Wagner is able as a poet to *sustain* his motive, and open new paths of fresh beauty, which are both charming in themselves and effective in respect to the Drama of which they are a part. If a conception be really beautiful, there is no use in curtailing its poetical treatment out of deference to the barbarous desires of tradespeople to ‘get thro’ with it quickly. The rushing atmosphere of modern life is sadly destructive of æsthetic mood.

Scenes of such length as those which occur in Wagner’s works would be impossible in Drama without Music. However, such expatiations of a situation should not be subtly complex, or irrelevant, or mere display.

There is a slow statuesque form of acting which is fitted to the Music-Drama, in which the *music* prevents any gaps in the *action* (the last scene of *Stiefried*, for example), and this must be *practised*. The actor must neither look embarrassed nor raging.

From the difficulties experienced it would seem to be one of the most difficult things for a singer to plant himself firmly upon his legs and stand still without looking at someone in the audience, or looking as if he felt the presence of the audience. The manly and yet modest way in which *Parsifal* can simply stand for three-quarters of an hour with his back to the audience, and not seeking to attract attention to himself from the great spectacle before us, or the music about us, ought to be a profound lesson to the participant in a Music-Drama. An orator may often employ gesture very continuously and effectively while speaking, and yet avoid much of the violent gesticulation of the demagogue. A preacher may enforce his remarks with a measured gesture that will not be derogatory to the solemnity and dignity of the altar. It is remarkable how effectively the hands and full arms may be used without the body departing from an erect, manly position, with the head thrown back. A great deal of practice is required by the singer to find those postures which can be persisted in with ease. Many actors (probably with the idea of dramatic intensity) force their position—viz. do not allow their muscles to speak for themselves. The implications of gracefulness of movement and repose of posture are very intimately implicated with ease of movement and the minimum expenditure of energy (cf. H. Spencer, Essay on Gracefulness). For the singer participating in the Music-Drama, this is of the highest importance, for upon posture depends voice and clear declamation and strict economy of energy. Acting is quite a different problem from play-acting. The voice is extremely dependent upon the proper freedom of the lungs (see accurate intonation, part 7, p. 114), upon the calmness of mind and upon concentration of energy.

We are all familiar with the disastrous effects upon the voice of excitement and distraction of attention in the case of amateurs in simple concert performances even. When one considers the colossal task before the singer-actor in employing all his or her means of expression with perfect unity (C2) and musical exactitude (C3) for such a work as *Tristan* or *Parsifal*, we can realise what training is necessary and what persistence. It is not a matter of a few years' play.

(Cf. the great danger in the actor calling attention to himself, derogatory to his part of 'character' in a Drama, by singing and acting too much towards the audience—the player must not act to the audience—this immediately separates him from the stage and from the Drama. This was one of the most disgusting of the foot-light practices of prima donnas, &c. It is perhaps the most vivid way by which they suggested *insincerity* (C4). It is one of the most noticeable features of Operas, where the 'situation' often encourages it by prescribing a musical soliloquy. That it is not solely due to the dramatic exigencies is shown by the fact that actors in spoken Dramas are often addicted to this orientation of their expression when the few words they have to say might be easily understood if spoken loud enough (about as loud as the 'asides' are spoken for instance). Further, because they are for ever silently acting towards the audience, so that it is not a question of the audience hearing them.

The stage seems to generate a sort of professional self-consciousness, which often seriously detracts from the merits of the work given. As regards the Music-Drama, it is not so much a matter of lack of naturalism, or affectation, as it is a distracting feature (C2), and liable to suggest insincerity (C5) and lack of emotion (D). Cf. the effect of conventional *recitative* (p. 109). Cf. also the manneristic way in which operatic singers often bring their stage practices of singing over the foot-lights, and tragical acting and expression into the Concert Hall even. Here is another case of overlapping of Arts and expectancy. There is seldom any call for acting on the concert platform. We should hardly expect the leader of an orchestra to attempt to act out an excerpt from an Opera which he might be directing in a concert.

The acting which is a part of the Music-Drama may differ greatly from the pantomime which accompanies a recited drama. Music is a very wonderful means of giving a real *soul* to actions by its power of suggesting the presence of emotions *underlying* the spontaneous actions. Music can



enliven pure pantomime through intervals which would be unbearably long if occurring in a spoken drama. To a certain extent Music can forcibly suggest the state of mind out of which an act springs. But a necessary feature is that the acting must agree with the state of mind presumably causing it—the emotions as dictated by words, stage directions, and Music. (*C 2*). So little care is ordinarily taken in this respect on the stage. The careless traditions of Opera and its senseless mannerisms still cling to prima donnas as well as ‘supers.’ Contrast the obligato acting noted in full by Wagner, not as in Operas left to the caprice of the actor or to tradition.

(*C 2*) proscribes any irrelevant actions, and with (*D*) prescribes that every action should stand in a distinct relation to the ‘situation’ (*C 3*, *C 3a*). There is often a tendency to act too much as well as too intensely. There should be no distracting ‘fidgeting.’ (*C 2*) proscribes any action which is not fitted to the emotion which it is its function to express.

*C 2*,  
*C 3*,  
*C 3a*,  
*D*

(*E* and *D*) prescribe a constant endeavour on the part of the actor to act as much (viz. as continuously) as is consistent with the repose or sculpturesque style prescribed by (*A*), and as is allowed by (*C 2*).

Here is probably a critical point where artistic feeling will be necessary to perfect performance. If possible, the stage directions by the composer should be as detailed and definite as possible. The style of acting required for the Music-Drama is one which an actor is very much less likely to appreciate and practise, than that of the stage imitated closely from everyday life. On the one hand the emotional character of the Music-Drama (*E*), and the function of aiding in clearness (*C 2*) prescribe as much acting as possible, but both (*C 2* and *B*) require this acting to be dramatically and severely consistent with the action, and to be measured in character, displaying repose and predilection for statuesque Beauty. That men in everyday life do not gesticulate, or otherwise display their feelings, and carefully avoid any posturing, has nothing whatever to do with the Music-Drama, which, as we have seen (*A*), does not propose to be natural in the sense of reproducing contemporary life and manners. The same consideration applies to idealistic Sculpture.

## 9. POETRY AND DICTION.

*The Poetry (in general).*—We have already fixed upon ‘Dramatic’ Poetry (according to *D* and *C*) as the kind best fitted to combine with Music. In order to give definiteness to musical expression every aid should be solicited, and the Stage offers a veritable array of means of expression of emotions—the visible characters, speech, gesture, facial expression, visible acts, costume, and scenery. Each of these features of the Stage is an important aid in giving clearness to the phases of emotion expressed by the Music. Moreover, the ‘direct’ form of discourse is the only form fitted to lyrical expression. *Speech* is the proper medium to employ in narrating adventures. But where persons are represented as actually performing the acts themselves, the emotion which impels them justifies a form of expression more exalted than ordinary speech, and hence a lyrical form of expression is not highly unnatural. The person in this case is not coolly narrating the feelings and acts of others, but he is himself acting and feeling. Unless the person himself be urged by an emotion which impels him to expression, he has no excuse for using any mode of expression more exalted or emotional than ordinary speech. For the mere narration of impersonal facts a poetic diction even is too exalted; much more so then *song* and *recitative*. This, of course, has more to do with the ‘situation’ (3) than with the language employed, but it is very important to get a clear idea of the emotional situation concerned in the Music-Drama in order to see clearly what general Style of Poetry will be expedient therefor. It is from this ‘general situation’ that the conclusion can be drawn that the Poetry will display all those qualities which are *emotional* as opposed to calm narrative, or to the rationalistic propositions of science, or to abstract ideas or moralising, or to intellectual complexity. Theoretically, there would seem to be no reason whatever for saying anything on these points, for Poetry would not be Poetry that did not display them. But, and this is very important, there is a great deal of Poetry extant that is not Poetry, and we have become so used to Poetry possessing the character of scientific disquisition, or moralising and philosophising complexity, and the stamp of modern intellect in general, that we are no longer sensitive to the true field of Poetry, especially that of singable Poetry in this sense of ‘arising from a lyric situation.’ From the spontaneous rhapsodist pouring forth his words directly to his auditors, and inspired by their presence, and attention, and applause, the poet has become addicted to the *pen*, and all its consequences of cool composition, sought-for diction, unemotional subject-matter, the long and complicated

sentence, development of the intellect. So far has this gone at various times that a certain artificial form of diction which had come to be looked upon as "Poetry," became differentiated so far from its subject-matter that it seemed quite natural to "poets" that *this* constituted *Poetry*, whatever subject-matter or situation it might be applied to : to such an extent had poetic diction ceased to be a speech arising naturally out of the feelings generated by the subject-matter—a spontaneous product of the poet's feelings. This lack of feeling for the nature of Poetry has already been referred to (p. 24), but deserves repetition, not only for its important bearing upon the character which the poetic context of the Music-Drama should display, but also in reference to Song and the field of Poetry in general.

It is hardly possible to make any more than the most general statements about the form of the Poetry, such as that it should be highly æsthetical (*B*) ; should agree with the dramatic action (*C2*) ; should be simple (*C1*) ; should agree intimately with the vocal part (*C3a*) ; should be highly emotional (*D* and *E*). That it should tally with the general conditions proposed by the Canons is evident, but it is difficult to lay down any dogmatic rules as to what particular form the Poetry should take. This for several reasons. For instance, it is just possible that the form which the language would take would be somewhat influenced by the spirit of the particular language employed by the poet, and this would be entirely a matter for the creative poet and not the theorist. Thus, Wagner cultivated with a degree of success that seems astonishing a form of verse in which alliteration and assonance play a large rôle. He seems to have considered this form an actual aid even to him in composing. Whether another one would find it so has not been proved, but it is hardly likely that this form of verse would ever succeed in a language less fitted for it by its very nature than the German language was. Further, Wagner made use of metrical verse and even of rhymed verse not only in his earlier works but in his later also, and in some works all these features appear. Now the vocal style differs somewhat in these various forms of verse in a very satisfactory manner. Moreover, it is just possible that some other form might have served as well. Hence it will be seen that this is one of the parts of the Music-Drama that must be handled lightly at present. However, two points stand out clearly as part of the Style. The Poetry should mean something and relate to the dramatic action ; the words and vocal melody should agree intimately. The first of the points was often disregarded in the Opera, and the second in the Oratorio. The words should not be silly in meaning, and should not be forced to be accented on the wrong syllable.

*Style of Poetic Diction. Form of Speech.*—That the Style of diction

should be different from everyday speech follows from the consideration that the Music-Drama must not suggest the aspects of contemporary life on pain of appearing highly unnatural and ridiculous or disgusting. Just as a lofty poetic diction would be absurd if employed by a person in real life, so a vulgar parlance in connection with lofty Music and ideal situations would be ridiculous. To agree with the ideal element Music, we should have an unusual form of speech—and this is what is generally associated with the term ‘Poetry.’

A  
&  
B

The case is especially urgent in the Music-Drama in order to support the lofty subject-matter and artificial (viz. : musical) dialogue and prevent them from becoming ridiculous. Any suggestions of modern life by the employment of distinctly modern words and expressions, including ‘slang’ expressions, would be insufferable. The potency of such words is seen in its humorous side in the Operette or the comic Opera (cf. *Mikado*) and in its serious side in ballads and in Poetry aiming at an exalted effect (cf. Tennyson’s *Idylls of the King*, the *Holy Grail*, etc.). As regards the use of archaic forms in words and expressions the works of Wagner have been much criticised. (Cf. *Ring*.) A somewhat remarkable case of the potency of more or less obsolete expressions in heightening and sustaining a weird and supernatural subject matter is to be noted in Coleridge’s *Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner*, which is well worth re-reading from this standpoint. Notice the ‘antient’ expressions that occur in the striking opening :—

“It is an ancient Mariner,  
And he stoppeth one of three ;  
‘By thy long grey beard and glittering eye,  
Now wherefore stopp’st thou me ?’

\* \* \* \*

He holds him with his skinny hand,  
‘There was a ship,’ quoth he.  
‘Hold off, unhand me, greybeard loon !’  
Eftsoons his hand dropt he.”

\* \* \* \*

Besides employing unusual words and phrases, poetic diction is accustomed to display an unusual arrangement of its words—an order of words such that ‘more accented’ and ‘less accented’ syllables succeed each other in a regular manner, which *rhythm* further separates the diction from everyday speech, and makes it capable of sustaining the sentiments of a lofty subject. Whether this would be an indispensable feature of the Music-Drama is a very different problem and needs more experiments before a judgment can be passed. That Rhyme has no effect in connection with Music, and is therefore a dispensable feature and should not be allowed to

trammel the poet-composer, seems self-evident. The same holds of metre perhaps. The very fact that Wagner employed verse in which both were absent, and also verse in which both were present, would seem to indicate that they are superficial and dispensable features in so far as the Music-Drama is concerned. (Cf. *Lohengrin*, *Meisters.*, *Tristan*, *Parsifal*.) It is barely possible that Wagner's use of Rhythm and Rhyme was a result of habit since he began by using it, or perhaps it aided him in keeping the whole in a poetic atmosphere while composing; or it is possible that he felt his texts (which often appeared independent from and, in some cases, long before the work as a whole was performed or accessible even), would be taken as *literary* products and adversely criticised as such, and hence preferred to cast them in a more purely literary form than they might otherwise have presented. In some cases the actual text differed from this provisional draft. Cf. ending of *Götterdämmerung*.

It should be a beautiful form of diction, that is, it should display in its mode of expression those loftier modes of expression which poets have found. The images should be derived from those objects which are in themselves beautiful. In other words, it should be the most æsthetical poetic diction as regards 'content' that the artist can grasp. B

It should display simplicity, viz.: it should not be a complicated Style like that employed by the scientific man to express his complex ideas. It should have a simpler grammar (cf. Hans von Wolzogen), viz.: it should appeal as little as possible to the intellect in order that it may appeal to the emotions. C r

Just as the *action* must be very simple in its character, so the language and the ideas expressed thereby must be simple and easily comprehensible; the attention to the *Music* must not be deflected by a complex literary Style. C r

The apparatus of language must be very simple when the language is combined with Music, in order that the attention required by the Music may not be monopolised by the intellectual expenditure in understanding our meaning of the language employed.

The complex sentence is necessary in a 'conversation play' (spoken Drama), but the simplicity required for the musical Drama must be attained by a vivid presentative action, by which all is brought direct before the eye of the auditor, and his attention thereby economised to the utmost with the surety of making him understand clearly the course of the action. In this respect the difference between an *acted* action (presentative) and a *narrated* action, is similar to that between a *presentative form of address* (the exclamation, command, question) and the impersonal form of address, or *talk concerning some* action not immediately or presentatively acted on the stage by the speakers at the time (narrative). In this con-



should agree intimately with the vocal notes and their succession, accent, etc. Thus, in the accompanying diagram,

—	Emotional Expression.	Phonetic Side.
Words . . .	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>
Vocal music .	<i>a'</i>	<i>b'</i>

not only should the 'inner' side of the words *a*, be marked by a correspondence in emotional meaning with the Music *a'*, but also the 'outer' or phonetic side of the words *b*, should correspond in detail with the vocal tones, viz. be represented by *b'*, and not by something quite different, as *c* or *d*. This two-sided agreement is a very complicated affair. The 'mouthability' of the words in connection with their tones is a great feature, and a factor in the smoothness, beauty, force and comprehensibility of the musical dialogue. It is a pure assumption, that the highly differentiated products of the 'pen poet,' should furnish perfect materials for lyric application. Operas and Oratorio display many faults in this respect—to the extent even of reversing the accent in common words, and in frequent mutilations and repetitions. So far as I know, Wagner avoided these faults (except where they are a part of the intended effect as in *Meistersinger*), and yet the point is finer than this, for there is a great difference in the perfection of welding words and tone between his earlier and later works. The whole matter is too technical to discuss here, even if the author were capable, which he is not. It is probable that composers have not said the last word upon the subject, although it has long been an important matter in song-writing. Its importance seems especially great in the Music-Drama, on account of the implications of highly emotional character of the subject-matter, and of the importance of the words being easily understood (since they have an important meaning and function), and in being capable in connection with the vocal Music of working an effect upon the spectator. Theoretically there seems to be much in favour of Wagner's 'strong syllable' form of versification as displayed in the Ring. It would seem that this form subjected the poet to less restraints, having no assignable effect in the finished work, and is very forcible for dramatic expression, and lending itself to easy comprehension by its incisive accent of important syllables. That there should be a diction for the Music-Drama differentiated from everyday speech, or even from ordinary Poetry, does not seem preposterous. To a certain extent,

something like this has been the case for years, namely, where Italian has been used as a 'musical language' outside of Italy. But this very case of Operas sung in the Italian, points out the danger of such a differentiated language—it is very liable to overstep the bounds of easy comprehension, and thereby contravene the most important feature of serious Drama. There are reasons for believing that this has actually happened in the case of Wagner's works when given in German outside of Germany, and to a certain extent when given in translation, for what with trying to translate the sense literally and reproduce the alliteration, and fit the syllables to the original vocal score, the result is often anything but exhilarating. If the words are not understood, the dramatic interest droops, and the mind naturally devotes itself to the vocal and instrumental Music, pure and simple, and not being wholly satisfied thereby, complains of the total work. At any rate, it would seem as if enough materials were at hand in the whole range of musical works of the past (including the negative evidence of the faults in this matter of diction in Operas and Oratorios), to point out the best road. If not, then a field is open to genius to invent a perfect conglomerate of words and vocal melody or declamation.

*D* A treatment of objective events seldom calls for diction any more related than prose form (cf. Scientific Treatises). Unless there be emotional exaltation on the part of the speaker (poet or writer), there is no call for anything but calm, unimpulsive speech.

*D & E* The case is different with the Music-Drama, in which the situation and feelings concerned predicate the most 'direct' discourse possible—the most personal, the least descriptive. The expression is presumably the direct outcome of the impulse of the strong feelings of the participants in the Drama, and as such "I" and "you" are the tenor of its song. It is the very antipodes of that situation proposed by a text-book on chemistry, which *describes* a chemical element without any trace of feeling or personality—all pitched in the third person, and neuter 'it' at that. The dramatic situation refers predominantly to the persons present to the eye and implicated, and not to some distant or absent matter. In this regard, the dialogue is highly 'presentative' as befits the corresponding nature of Music (*C*), and the conditions of easy comprehensibility of words and situations (*C* *r*). It is difficult to describe this subtle difference between a dramatic Style as most highly differentiated from the epical style and the elegy. Enough has been said under other heads, parts 2 and 3. Contrast the descriptive tone of Gray's *Elegy in a Churchyard*, and of Scott's *Marmion*, with the intensely emotional tone of Wagner's *Tristan*, ii, 2.



## 10. SCENERY.

(COSTUME, STAGE APPURTENANCES, AND SYMBOLISM.)

The fault of the Opera was not that its tableaux were spectacular, but that its plot did not always *require* this element of display, and further that they were often of a meretricious pictorial quality. If a drama be conceived *à priori* in the pictorial spirit, its scenic effects will be demanded by the plot, and will be beautiful in conception. Both faults are characteristic of the pretentious Operas of Meyerbeer, in which the dramatic part hardly justifies some of the grandiose effects, and the effects in themselves are far more suggestive of cleverness and desire to amaze than any pursuit of Beauty. To realise this fully, one must carefully examine the works themselves, and compare the scenic effects with the spirit of the Music. In many cases they will be found to coincide with the contemporaneous ballet in tendencies and spirit. Show of *cleverness* in the execution and *wonder* in the appreciation were the meretricious substitutes for a pursuit of really beautiful effects. The attempt to gain applause by pirouetting upon one toe symbolises the whole tendency.

Of course, many of these features were aggravated by the discrepancies between Stage and Drama, viz. the Stage, the Music, and the Drama went their respective ways without reference to the distracting influences of such a procedure. Notice also that here, as elsewhere, these features were aggravated by the proposed 'realism' of the situation. Had there been no suggestions of a proposal to display the outer aspects of everyday life, much of the spectacular would not have appeared so highly artificial and affected. (Contrast opening scene of Wagner's *Rhinegold*, and cf. Qualities of Music and p. 18.)

One characteristic which is strongly expressed in Wagner's Dramas is the *love of pictorial Beauty*, the guidance of the Drama by a spirit of Beauty which suppressed all that is strongly repulsive. It seems strange that a musician such as Wagner should also have been such a clever discriminator of what is *pictorially* beautiful. Scenes from Wagner's Dramas are like pictures, pictures in which the feeling for the beautiful is never absent. Few are impressed by this artistic feature of Wagner's Dramas, because there are few people in the present age of hurry and trade that have the capability of not only seeing pictures, but also of feeling that they are seeing them; it is this little difference in viewing pictures which marks the difference between intellectual discrimination (or realisation of the forms represented) and artistic appreciation of the picture, that is, the experiencing of the emotions which the picture is designed to arouse, and also the gratification in the sensuous elements of colour and form which, in the discrimination of colour and form implied by perception, are merely utilitarian, while in Art they impart a flush of pleasure by their stimulation of the organs of sense and of the sensorium. To experience the thrill of pleasure which a work of art is destined to impart requires a capability of exposing the mind to the various *stimuli* in such a leisurely manner, with such repose of spirit, that

B  
&  
C 2

A

B

the great intellectual machinery of the head may not be set in motion, and that which should give pleasure be degraded to a mere problem or *study*. A contemplative mood is required, an unfatigued condition of the nerves and mind, and a mind not disposed to treat everything as something to be examined, probed, compared, studied, and criticised. The art critic is particularly liable to be led away from art-enjoyment by the intellectual treatment implied by his profession.

Another thing is necessary to enable one to thoroughly appreciate the transcendental merit of the scenic effects of Wagner's Dramas, that is—a love of nature; it is true that the myths that Wagner adopted as subjects for his poems would necessarily lead him to scenes far from the false show of the luxury of the modern drawing-room, with its glitter and flare of gas-lights, heated atmosphere, meretricious ornament and nervous atress. But Wagner did more than merely to adopt the primitive scenes which his subject-matter offered him, he chose and disposed his materials in the most effective manner from the standpoint of the representation on the stage, for he did not design his Dramas as *literary* productions to be read in the solitary cell, but to be performed in their entirety on the stage. The *stage* of Wagner, as compared with that of Shakespeare, will serve to show the marvellous advance in the outward belongings of the Drama. The scenes are continually shifting in Shakespeare's plays, because there was little or no *Scenery* employed. The chief stress was laid on the dramatic element of the play, and it is probable that the actors were much more subordinated to the literary (rhetorical) element, and mimetics also. Since the female parts were taken by men and boys, as on the ancient Greek Stage, it is probable that the one 'who spoke' was not as important as 'what was spoken.' This presents a most striking contrast to the inordinate importance which the opera-singer and *prima donna* have assumed in modern times, when the 'what' was never considered, but only the 'who' (for whom the elements of the Opera were so distorted that nothing was elaborated, except the vocal melody, and even in that very luxuriousness usurped the place of *Beauty*). The mimetics of the Grecian or Elizabethan stage may have equalled that of the modern stage, but the *scenery* and *scenic* effects (including dynamics of illumination) are certainly the products of the modern stage. The expression employed regarding Wagner's work in perfecting scenic effects employed previously might lead one to suppose that Wagner sought to be effective to the highest degree, that is, in the performance as a whole, consequently he avoided that straining for effect which results from exaggerating *one* element at the expense of the consistency of the dramatic whole. The *Lamp of Sacrifice* lighted Wagner through the mazes of combination of several elements, so that he did not forsake the path of dramatic consistency for the sake of displaying the glitter of stage paraphernalia. *Caterina Cornaro* (Music by Lachner) displays an evident effort to show as much as possible in the Setting (*mise-en-scène*). The real difference in the two spirits of display is this; both strive to be effective, but one is guided by a spirit of dramatic congruity which compels sacrifice of the various members for the *total effect*: the other is 'effective,' but inartistically so, for the display of scenic effects is often so inconsistent with the dramatic parts, so superfluous as regards the Drama, and so lacking in sublimity, that it shows its superficial or cheap character of effectiveness. Scenic effects which are *justified* by the dramatic action satisfy our minds with respect to the probability of the scene, and scenery and scenic effects which are artistically *beautiful* satisfy our æsthetical feelings. Such scenes as the opening of the *Rheingold*, or the hut of Hunding, with its great beams of oak and the giant fireplace, with the primæval oak sending its branches through the roof. Or the scene of the gathering of the "Walküries," with the vast piles of rock, the swift black clouds, and the wild war-like maidens. The forge-scene in *Siegfried*, and the splitting of the anvil by the strong blade of Nothung. Above all, the "awakening of Brünnhilde," lying in her shining armour in the midst of the red flames and clouds. Such scenes as these, with the ending of the *Götterdämmerung*, display an artistic ability for the pictorial part of Drama superior to all forerunners and contemporaries of Wagner.

*The Function of Scenery.*—Music may be much aided in its effect by costume and scenery, and its effect may be much detracted from by the

C<sup>2</sup>C<sup>1</sup>C<sup>2</sup>C<sup>3</sup>A  
&  
B

same cause. Thus, scenery representing a modern street is sufficient, by its bald and obtrusive realism, to ruin the effect of Music which requires an ideal environment. The incongruity between a modern street scene and a dramatic action with *sung* dialogue is so palpable that the effect is disgusting.

It was either fortunate or intentional that Wagner's plots often required musical dialogue in that the 'situations' called for it. Thus the *Meistersinger*, where the nature of the situation is often such that it requires of its own accord certain parts to be sung. (Cf. church scene, trial, and competition.) So in *Tannhäuser*, the Venusberg scene, with its "Praise of Venus" in song form, the chorus of the Pilgrims—the whole of the Wartburg scene of the Singers' contest. The most perfect equation in this regard between action and Music is found in *Rheingold*, where the opening scene presents such an unreal spectacle that the proper key-note of the mind is set for the rest of the work. In *Tannhäuser* the opening scene is so thoroughly unrealistic, strange, so far removed from everyday life, that the mind is put into the proper mood for appreciating the subsequent part, which might be too realistic for lyrical treatment were not the subject such as it is, rendering the music to the Wartburg scene and the Pilgrims' chorus a necessary lyrical element. The opening scene of the *Meistersinger* is in a church, with the accompanying church music, which prepares the mind for the subsequent transition to the vocal dialogue.

Even the fact of the situation of the second act of *Tristan* being one in *darkness* is not without importance. Darkness is a very admirable *general* means for setting us in the *ideal* region which Music requires. Even the fact of the *audience* being in a darkened auditorium is of great importance, and is practically recognised as important at the Bayreuth representations. (Cf. p. 140.) The bright blaze of the gas-lights in the auditoriums of modern opera houses of our cities (especially is this true of Italy) detracts greatly from the effect of a purely idealistic musical Drama by making each auditor feel the presence of the other auditors which constitute the real, modern world about him. Any means by which this sense of the 'society' relations can be obviated renders a real service to the art-work which is presented on the stage for *its own sake*, and not as a mere excuse for a society affair.

That this effect of darkness in the Drama was felt by Wagner is seen by the beautiful symbol which he makes of night and darkness in the dialogue of the scene itself—where day is used as the symbol of the *actual* world, and the darkness and absence of torches is symbolical of the unreal world in which the two lovers float—the world of their emotions occupying their souls to the exclusion of all the seen world of the day—deceit, etc. The text and music co-operate to heighten this effect—and the absence of any glaring light does a great deal to make the effect still more impressive. When we feel how the power of Music is not dependent on *seeing* as other Arts are, but can exert itself in its full intensity in the dark—or when the eyes are closed, then the peculiar fitness of this scene in *Tristan* can be felt. As the emotions of the two lovers are felt in all their purity and intensity far away from the noise and glare of the world, so the music makes its intensest impression on the listeners when the glare of the 'world' is extinguished in the auditorium, and the emotions of the actors are felt through the music which wells up through the air—an unseen power which exerts its whole force, now that no brilliant lights detract the attention from the mysterious power of the music. This is one of the few situations where the power of music can be felt in its most peculiar sphere.

One way of removing scenery from the adverse criticism of our sense of what is natural is to render it somewhat *indistinct*. As for the way in which Wagner's works are often performed, it would be much more satisfactory if such scenes as the 'Welding of the Sword' in *Siegfried*, etc., were a little less *apparent* in their industrial tameness. (Cf. Forging and kindred occupations.)

Since the time when the 'Stage' replaced the actual combats of the Amphitheatre, an avoidable lack of ferocity and reality has attended scenes of killing and of violence generally. We generally excuse this on grounds of humanity, and make such instinctive allowance that the Drama does not suffer much; but our attention is unavoidably called to the lack of reality, for the eye is astoundingly keen in detecting flaws in movements. For one person who is offended by a false note of an instrument in the orchestra, there are a dozen eyes which will detect a lack of reality in the acting. The bearing of this on the Music-Drama is that a little lack of reality or an obtrusive piece of stage deception will distract the attention of the hearer from the Music, for a longer or shorter time, and that *against* his will.

However solemn our frame of mind may be, it is seldom proof against the anti-climax effect of a revealed mishap or delusion in scenic effects. (The inspiring Music attending the appearance of Lohengrin has often been impaired by some insignificant blemish in the swan's conduct.) It is difficult to say in what manner the stage can be rendered more like a picture, but two facts from performances suggest themselves. The void space between the front row of seats and the edge of the stage in Bayreuth  
*B* certainly contributes to separate the spectacle from the spectators—to attain that æsthetic attitude of 'picture' and 'admirer' as distinguished from scene and participant therein. (Cf. p. 63.)

Of course, the arrangement of seats in 'balconies' which compels the  
*A B* spectators to look *down* upon a part of the stage leads them to see much of  
*C 2* the stage trickery which would not be apparent were the stage 'on the line' for all the spectators. Moreover, any architecture which is painted with respect to those in the lower parts of the house appears unpleasantly distorted to those in the upper parts. As for the 'boxes' directly abutting on the sides of the stage, they are irrelevant to the stage (as a work of art) in more ways than one.

*A* With respect to the pictorial character of the stage, a word may be  
*&* said about the 'opera-glass.' Like 'society boxes,' these features of the  
*B* modern opera house do not seem to have arisen from an artistic impulse; they are interesting as pointing out an inartistic way of looking at the stage. In the days in which the *prima donna* monopolised the attention of all spectators, the opera-glass was doubtless an excellent expedient for exploring her qualities—beautiful or otherwise. However, if a stage as a whole displayed the noble and beautiful character which it might display, there would be no excuse for devoting the entire attention to any single feature. Many a painting does not make its full impression unless the  
*B* spectator *looks at it as a whole*—sinks himself in the contemplation of it, so that he may be sensible of the 'general tone' which radiates from it. Especially is this true where the *colour*-effect is to be attained. There is a 'total effect' of the façade of a temple which cannot be felt by examining

any one column. In the case of the Music-Drama there is a particular reason why the use of the opera-glass is detrimental to the æsthetic enjoyment. We noticed that one reason for the adoption of an 'idealistic' style of Drama was that it aided in suppressing the adverse criticism of our 'naturalistic' instincts. Now the opera-glass is one of the best friends of such adverse criticism, for it pitilessly discovers and magnifies faults. For our own sake, then, we should avoid spoiling the effect of beautiful and noble Music by having our attention attracted to faults which might otherwise pass unnoticed. There is a good illustration to be drawn from the contemplation of a painting, so far as æsthetical appreciation of a picture is concerned. An artist ought to have the right to dictate the distance at which the picture should be viewed by the normal eye. Some paintings and statues (especially those associated with architectural design) dictate the general position of the spectator. A painting is not bound to run the gauntlet of exposing itself to a microscopical examination. For his own sake the spectator will keep his distance, and not ruin a deep impression by looking how the paint is laid on, and how many cracks there may be. Scene-painting, by the gigantic proportions of its works, is relegated to impressionist methods, and the Music-Drama further sanctions this by the importance which it lays upon the *general effect*, unimpaired by distracting details, as well as the suggestive mystery which is so well fitted to the nature of Music. That a freehand treatment of details is not inconsistent with conveying the essential nature of things is shown by the fact that a few strokes of a brush in the hands of an artist may give us a more vivid impression of the qualities of a tree than whole days of interfilling by an industrious steel-engraver. (Cf. Turner.) Out-of-doors situation is an easy way of getting away from the everyday scenery of cities.

One means of evading the critical spirit of the 'naturalist' is suggested by Nature, by Painting, and by the Stage.

Many visitors to Constantinople complain that a critical perusal of the city dispels the beautiful impression which the mosque-crowned hills made through the morning mists as the ship came into the Golden Horn. Painters who aspire to something more than market-products often find it of advantage not to reveal *all* of an object. The spectator who has seen a little too much of the apparatus of the opening scene in *Rhinegold*, but has been deeply moved by the beauty of the solemn procession bearing Siegfried's body, the armour gleaming in the moonlight, up the rocky heights, for the reason that this procession and the whole scene was shrouded in mystery by the obscurity and the mists, will have learned to appreciate the turning down of the lights and the gauze which allowed him to peacefully enjoy the grand *Music* which accompanies the latter scene. The difficulties of carrying Siegfried's body (not always a light weight) up the rocky heights (i.e. temporary staircase) are not so apparent to the trembling audience if the veiling mists (i.e. plenty of gauze, etc.)

C r

A

C r

A  
&  
B

C 3

timely interpose themselves. The 'bridal veil' has a deep significance for stage effects. The poetical glamour which can be cast over a roughly painted scene by a delicate veil evokes the wish that the average theatre would save a little money on bald realism and gas, and spend it on gauze. Whether or not the vocal part would suffer from a slight permanent veiling of the stage can only be determined by experiment; at any rate, the above scene from *Götterdämmerung* would not be affected thereby, since the orchestra assumes the whole emotional expression of the scene. The beauty and splendour which architectural features of a scene may be made to assume through mist and distance may be seen in some of Turner's works, or if one is fearful of the name of Turner let him look at Nature. Cf. temples in Egypt by sunset through smoke of village.

Bad and misleading scenery is less satisfactory than none at all. Square blocks of wood painted a sickly stone colour are simply hideous. If scenery be displayed unveiled to the eyes it should have some delicacy—refinement. There is one refuge for all stage directors; they can take refuge in indefiniteness of effect; they must become *impressionists* and paint the stage in large and suggestive traits. No matter how coarse a picture may be painted, it will not display its coarseness if removed a sufficient distance from the stage, or "dimmed" sufficiently by gauze interposed between the scenery and the audience or by generous recourse to a dim religious illumination. Magical effects may be obtained on simple stages by this means. The appearance and disappearance of Venus in the last act of *Tannhäuser* may be rendered truly magical and seducing if sufficiently dim. It might be well in many scenes to make the effect more "ideal" by inclosing the whole stage in a mist or cloud by a gauze screen transparent in its middle but opaque near the edges.

The boards of the stage floor are always disturbing in their effects when the seams are highly visible in the midst of a landscape. With an interval of half-an-hour between each act for change of scenery such disturbing features of the scenic picture might be obviated.

The Style of the Drama in which there are clouds and mists *requires* the *lights* to be extinguished in the auditorium. Clouds painted on gauze and mists or "effects of distance" must *not be lighted* from the auditorium (foot-lights), or they are seen *themselves* instead of imperceptibly veiling the *scenery* behind. The gauze must not appear except as a screen. The stage might be more "idealised" by a *permanent gauze screen* between the scenery and the audience. In any case much can be done by subduing the illumination.

Scenery should either reproduce the beauties of Nature, or else it should present beauties of its own. Some 'clouds' which were passed in front of a scene in the *Götterdämmerung*, as once seen by the author, were mere *parodies* of the delicacy of *Nature*, and were also not beautiful or pleasing in *themselves*; they reminded one of those clouds of dough adhering to some altar-pieces of the XVIIth Century (Jesuit). This is an important

point. Japanese Art displays many pleasing lines in its strange clouds and streams that the mind can enjoy as artistic features in spite of their unlikeness to Nature.

Modern scenery is made too much after the fashion of poor steel engravings—there is too much for the price; too much finish which is false in that it does nothing to make a feature more effective. As beautiful as the Greek theatre must have been in the fresh air and warm sunshine, yet that splendid development of the lands of cold and night—colossal scenic effects—is a compensation for much of the ancient open-air art. The scenic effects of our modern “night” representations are a feature not to be despised in our judgment of the theatre.

The illumination of the scenery and the stage in general should be carefully managed; there is no reason for throwing a strong light on a mountain range so that it comes within touching distance of the actors. Likewise it is not necessary to throw a strong light upon each wave in the marine scenes of the *Flying Dutchman*. Mystery is not only advantageous in a negative way by not arousing the critical faculties and in forestalling them, but further it has a positive value in supplying an artistic effect. It seems at times that we cannot possibly get over the old *prima donna* illumination. It is astonishing how callous many persons are, not only to artistic scenery, but to the presence of most glaring effects of paint, etc., in the make-up of the faces; likewise to one of the greatest effects possible—that of darkness upon the imagination of the spectator—an effect we have experienced more or less ever since we were little children, to which the world probably owes much of its naïve philosophy as displayed in myths and primitive religion. How much more effective dragons might be upon the stage if they were not compelled to bask and fight in the glare of an electric light—how much this interferes with their vague suggestiveness, exciting our imagination without fully satisfying it. A similar disregard of the advantages of mystery is seen in Painting, where angels are painted with that definiteness of appearance that makes the spectator feel just those qualities which are directly opposed to our idea of an angel—so many pounds avoirdupois, and complete lack of spirituality. One cannot fancy them capable of sustaining themselves above the ground for a moment. The last scene of the *Flying Dutchman* is another instance in which the methods of the Music Hall are allowed to spoil an artistic effect. As it is usually given, the apotheosis is of such an astonishing brilliancy as to be childish, if not ludicrous. Our stage effects have little or no *depth*; they seem to be unable to suggest that they extend more than fifty feet behind the footlights. It is as if we could not get beyond the limits of the three walls which make up the paraphernalia of a chamber-drama. The *Flying Dutchman* and *Senta* seem to rise in a highly phosphorescent condition directly out of the water near us, the lights and colours being so strong as to suggest the vulgar colouring of a cheap Christmas card.

Illumination can also be a means of idealisation, cf. Hagen's vision in

*Götterdämmerung* and Erda's Gestalt. There is also a deep connection between *mystery* and subdued illumination which should not be overlooked (p. 141). Cf. in this connection the somewhat remarkable *strangeness* of the *Music* accompanying the *visual* strangeness of such scenes as "the invocation of Erda" (*Siegfried*).

C5 It is worthy of note that among the strangest colours of the spectrum are the *violets* (possibly due to *unfamiliarity* in everyday life). Perhaps the same may be said of the blue-greens (cf. the wonderful colour-effects in connection with the serpentine dance). That the 'general tone' of a picture can 'speak,' can aid in rendering the dramatic action more clear and forcible is shown in *Tannhäuser*, act i., where the scene changes (in deep accordance with the *Music*) from the glitter, and crimsons, and pink of the voluptuous Venusberg to the passionless green forest and hills of the Wartburg region, with the naïve shepherd's song and chorus of the pilgrims.

A school of scenery *painters* for the pictorial part of the Music-Drama is wanting—an "idealistic" school with pictorial phantasy and a feeling for *decorative* effects.

There is a high "idealism" requiring a vivid fancy, for which a school is needed in this day of boasted triumphs of the realistic imitation of Nature. Also a realisation of the charm of *mystery*.

Architecture, perhaps, does not enter into Wagner's works to the extent which it might. *Parsifal* containing, perhaps, more that is related to Architecture (in its temple interior scene) and Klingsor's castle.

Wagner takes us into the "rein-natürliche" in removing us from interiors (*Siegfried* versus *Traviata*). His works are marked by open-air scenes.

B Had Wagner adopted the myth as a basis for his Drama as a mere foil for the display of beautiful Scenery, he could hardly have found better motif; for the forms of Siegfried, Brünhilde, and the gods are ideals of men and women with a costume which approximates in its plastic character to that of the *Greeks*. The bare limbs and free flowing robes are not only beautiful in themselves, but they serve, in addition, to forcibly prevent any suggestions of modern life in its outer aspects, and further, they have their dramatic value as symbolic attributes of the *characters* of the *personæ*.  
A  
C5

C2 There is a very great difference between the *show* pieces of a 'pantomime' and the rich, but subdued pictures which may make the effect of the Music-Drama stronger and clearer.

B The fact is, that scenes of high ideal Beauty would be *less effective* if not accompanied by *Music* which supplies the proper atmosphere.

C1 A scene does not necessarily detract from the dramatic part by reason of its *quiet*  
C2 *Beauty*—but it does so if a mere show of luxurious effects *uncalled for* by the Drama. The Drama of the Music-Drama should *require* the scenes which its Style calls for.

A 'Costume' as a feature in idealisation should be far removed from contemporary costume. *Costume* is really an important factor in the æsthetical effect on the mind, for our *daily experience* makes us sensitive to the presence of clothing and its particular 'cut' or fashion. Hence a modern costume on an actor in the Music-Drama is sufficient to *ruin* the whole ideal effect. The great difficulty for the music-dramatist is in recon-



ciling the most ideal Art of all (the highly *artificial* Art of *Music*) with the reality of human beings acting as in real life. That orchestral Music should in some way stand for disembodied emotion seems partly natural, but an acted *Drama*, accompanied by Music—here the sense of the real is likely to be pained. However, this highly artificial combination may become tolerable when the artificial mixture is enjoyed as an *artificial* contrivance (or art) devised to please the hearer, just as the “ballad” becomes tolerated. It is probable that the obliviousness to the artificial combination of Music and acting human beings must be *cultivated*, else the beauty cannot be felt. The absurdity of the artificial situation is painfully apparent to the person who views “the Opera” for the first time, viz.; without the preparatory deadening of his sense of the real (or the *usual*, his daily experience); such a person feels as if a strong Drama had been ruined by an absurd attempt to ‘hitch Music to it.’ It is in helping one over this *difficulty* that costume is of prime importance, for the spectator is inclined to view the artificial combination more leniently if he is not alarmed by seeing everyday figures parade before him in the guise of persons unable to express themselves otherwise than in song. If the costume be totally unlike any he is familiar with in everyday life, his mind is more likely to admit that beings *so* dressed might naturally employ song in expressing themselves.

That the Style of the Music-Drama condemns such artificial and ugly features as crinoline, etc. is self-evident. In fact such features are just as inconsistent with the Music-Drama as with Sculpture. (Cf. p. 49.) As regards the æsthetic treatment of dress, it is evident that the Music-Drama offers a fine field for the artist. He is bound to no historic Mode of costume, and can realise some of the beauties of the Greek garment. In this connection it may be well to remark that many of the costumes on the stage which pose as Grecian are entirely opposed to our idea of the Greek costume. Tight lacing and the general outline of the ‘corset’ are referred to, of course. Quite aside from the noxious influence of such practices upon vocal execution, they are instantly suggestive of modern life and worse—of the vanity of modern life (*B* and *C* 4). An inspection of the best Greek statues will show one what is meant, better than descriptions of the difference between garments ‘cut to fit’ and those which merely drape the body with a material loosely woven enough to fall easily into folds and heavy enough to allow gravity to get a good hold upon it. It is next to impossible at the present day to find textiles that are not too closely woven to fold easily, and not flimsy like thin silks, or not ‘flashy’ like satin finished goods. But the complete system of drapery requires the abolition of the before-mentioned modern features also.

To symbolism apply the considerations classified in the Canons *A*, *B*, *C*, etc. Thus, that the objects chosen as symbols should not suggest distinctively modern life is in accordance with (*A*). The pistol is directly opposed

*A*  
&  
*B*

*A*

to the 'removal from modern life' (p. 58). The sword and spear, on the contrary, have in themselves and in their historical associations something strange and poetic and suggestive of other types of life than that which has led to the invention of Gatling guns, repeating rifles, and torpedoes. This leads us to Canon *B*, for, strangely enough, many modern instruments, tools, arms, etc., are more or less lacking in Beauty and unsuited to use in Painting, Sculpture, or Poetry. Perhaps this unfitness may be partly explained by their non-conformity to quality *C1*—they are too complicated, appeal too much to the intellect, do not spontaneously suggest by their outward form their mode of manufacture or mode of use. The sword and spear fulfil all these conditions.

Turner, the modern Pre-Raphaelites, and Wagner are alike in one respect, and all representative of their epoch, viz. a leaning towards poetic symbolism and allegory. There is an 'interpretation' to be educed from most of Turner's scenes, (see Stopford Brooke, in his notes on the "Liber" of Turner), which is sententious in its character. The symbolism of the pictures of the Pre-Raphaelites was a notable feature of their work, well agreeing with the *serious* nature of their aims. Wagner's works are pre-eminently dramatic manifestations of religious and philosophical concepts.

Each play of Wagner's is the outward and visible sign of some great *idea*. It is the symbolic objectification of that idea. But whether this wholesale symbolism in Art is essential (particularly to the Music-Drama) remains to be seen. (Cf. p. 51.) 12

Even the 'gods' in *Ring of the Nibelungen* are artistic, in that they are the concrete personifications of moral impulses, they are not convenient 'occurrences' to call in at trying moments to 'protect the Greeks from the Trojans.' Like the personal curse laid on the ring by Alberich, they do no more than the impulses which they represent would do. Siegmund is killed by the wronged husband as if Frika did not enter into the play as the protectress of the sanctity of marriage. Neither gods, nor symbolical attributes, nor magic are extraneous or capricious powers and wants. They are rather concrete symbols of natural human tendencies conforming to poetic probability and unity of dramatic action.

This may be viewed as an extension of the device of personification. Wagner's works, as wholes and entities, may be regarded as (concrete) personifications of *abstract* ideas.

## 11. THE STYLE OF THE PERFORMANCE.

This, while seeming a merely secondary matter, and usually taken for granted, is in fact a matter of the highest importance. What does it avail us if we *have* the Music-Drama, but cannot enjoy it? The proper style of performance is the *sine qua non* of the Music-Drama; without it the Music-Drama is like the mere architectural "plan" of an unconstructed building. It is one of the points of the Style least realised to-day in our usual performances of Wagner's works. In fact the desideratum at the present day is less attempts *at* Wagner, and more realisations of Wagner. This is where critics might do some good, if they would only outlive the old tactics of the *prima donna* period, and spend more time upon the performance *as a whole*, and less on Madame X's voice and high notes. We have the same trouble with our theatrical performances; they are very liable to be uneven as regards the various parts, and all savour of pursuit of self-laudation and financial amelioration by *any* means, whether artistic or not. In fact, the very spirit of the Stage seems to be opposed to any serious art interests. Amusements absorb almost everything, and it seems at times as if high-class Music in concerts was supported rather by the efforts of the leaders of the orchestras and by a sort of 'society' tolerance, than by æsthetic demands. The whole spirit of the opera-house is that of a commercial enterprise to furnish amusement for a part of the day in common with other society events. If we are really to have a serious *Art* to which we are willing to give up a little time and energy from other affairs, some change will have to take place in our mode and spirit of performance, viz. audition. A

It is even conceivable that a mistake is being made in giving Wagner's works in an opera-house under the ordinary conditions; their great length, which either bores the habitu  at the end of a day devoted to entirely contrary matters, or leads to more or less reasonable 'cutting'; the meagre opportunities for relaxation from a highly complicated stimulation of nerves and mind, the lack of a quiet spirit of contemplation undisturbed by features external to the work. These and other considerations make it very doubtful whether, in seeing Wagner's works in our opera-houses, we are doing any more than satisfying our curiosity as to what they are like in some few respects. The works are given and seen under very unfavourable circumstances, and then criticised as if they could only be given in this casual and fragmentary manner. The opera-house is still attempting to serve two functions, that of displaying works of art, and (primarily) of furnishing an evening's amusement to a large number of people who are not only unwilling or unable to give up a little time to a preparation for

the work and its calm reception, but actually busy themselves with matters quite foreign to the art-work taking place in one corner of the house. Whether Wagner's gigantic (for the time and circumstances) undertaking of the Bayreuth Theatre is a success or not, it at least may serve to point out the way we ought to go about it to enjoy a serious work of art. It would seem that we might have learned the same lesson from the Greeks in their festival performances, but ancient Athens seems so different from the modern world without slaves (or in which all are slaves) that it is difficult to see the moral. We are so addicted to the pursuit of an evening's amusement that we never stop to consider that serious Art cannot sincerely flourish under the same conditions as those of the Music Hall. The same spirit pervades our decoration, we have more *bric-à-brac* about us in our houses than a Greek ever thought of, and yet we have no time to look at it, or train ourselves to distinguish between the good, bad, and indifferent. Of the quiet spirit of composure which should accompany the contemplation of real works of art we get an inkling in contemplating some of the features of the Bayreuth performance. In the first place the removal of the small village from the great world which renders the journey almost a pilgrimage, has a tendency to counteract that spirit of merely 'turning into' a theatre for a little amusement and conversation. In some respects it reminds us of the conditions of the Greek festivals. It means that one has gone there for a certain purpose, and it allows him to, more or less, devote his whole mind and attention to that purpose. This is further proclaimed in the time at which the performance takes place, its length and its nature. It is not parasitical upon an evening dinner with the attendant possibilities of dropping in some time during the performance, 'just to see how the play's getting along.' The length of time given up to the work allows its performance in its integrity without the usual 'cutting' of the work, and allows time between the acts for recreation of body and mind. The form of the theatre is such as to ensure a proper sight and hearing of the work to all admitted, while discouraging, by darkening the auditorium, any of that display of dress and personality which is the bane of serious art-enjoyment. The disposition of the orchestra also has a place in that differentiation of a theatre from a place of amusement. Not that there is anything wrong in amusement in its place, but there are good reasons for excluding it where it interferes with an effect worth exercising a little self-restraint for in order to obtain. It would occupy too much space to take up the subject here, but it is hoped that the foregoing and a few words further, may make it clear that art-enjoyment is subjected to certain conditions, and to disregard the subjective conditions of enjoyment is to deprive one's self of the enjoyment.

This is not a matter of the Music-Drama only: it holds of art-works in general. That the best way to enjoy the symphony is not to sit next to the drum, or that to enjoy a painting one should not have a headache,

or examine the pigments only, are generally recognised features of æsthetic enjoyment.

It seems justifiable to presuppose some familiarity with the plot of a Music-Drama previous to approaching the actual performance. This should in no way, however, supplant an understanding of the vocal dialogue *as rendered* on the stage. This preliminary knowledge is somewhat comparable to the popular mythology which the performance of a Greek play presupposed. That there should be any previous study of the score presupposed, is contrary to the very nature of an art-work as contrasted with a piece of ingenious mechanism, or with a scientific treatise. The painting that presupposes a knowledge of Hottentot mythology before it can be understood and enjoyed is running great risks.

That the construction of the theatre is a part of the style of the performance, seems to have been very clearly recognised by Wagner. That the interior should be such as to enable all the spectators to get the pictorial effect is largely disregarded in our opera houses, in which respect, the above mentioned feature of a *double* function creeps out naïvely. It will only be necessary to state that stage scenery suffers disastrously from being looked at from very far above 'the line' (as from side boxes or the upper gallery): from being looked at too near, or from the sides (as from boxes at the sides). Our callousness to beautiful scenic effects is often naïvely revealed by our insensibility to such distortions. One must be able to see, but not to see too much. That the origin of boxes was not in deference to art-enjoyment is very evident. Their *distracting* tendency appears in several forms.

The darkening of the auditorium is not only connected with this latter feature, but is probably a positive factor in the effect of the stage. In connection with an unseen orchestra, it may have a great effect in heightening the scenic and other effects. Likewise, the complete depression of the orchestra below the line of sight of the spectators, as effected in the theatre in Bayreuth, has not merely the negative virtue of not distracting the attention from the Drama by the silhouette of the perspiring leader of the orchestra in professional converse with the characters of the scene before us. It has the further *positive* advantages of heightening the mysterious effects of Music;—of accenting its function as the bearer of the emotions of the Drama;—of producing (especially in connection with the curved 'hood') a general effect of wonderful harmony; and it is a very important means of preventing the voices from being overwhelmed by the orchestra. This last is a very important point, for it has not only to do with the vocal effect regarded as a mere musical effect, but further with the *intelligibility* of the words which has been deemed an essential feature of the style of the Music-Drama (cf. 7, C 2). In the ordinary performances this comes out naïvely, for we easily fall into the way of caring very little whether

we understand the words or not (this is somewhat aided by our experiences with the Opera); the singers are impelled to run about the stage screeching like mad for fear they will not 'make an effect,' and they frequently resort to that old method of making their influence felt by standing very near the footlights, and carefully facing the audience whenever they have occasion to say anything.

Connected with the last point is the important feature of the Style mentioned of making the performance a *special* one, upon which both participants and audience put forward their best efforts. Under Acting and Vocal Style has been mentioned the necessity for surety of vocal intonation, of enunciation of words, of rhythmic surety both in music and acting, and in repose and freedom from anxiety of the whole performance—all entailing a long and serious preparation and concentration of attention. To the large *répertoire* of the German opera house may perhaps be attributed the mediocre performances of Wagner's works sometimes heard. The singers should be very familiar with their parts in order to act and sing freely and surely and without exciting anxiety on the part of the spectators, which is destructive of æsthetical effect in any Art of this kind.

Great stress has been laid upon the necessity for complete *consistency* of all parts, and, as has been said, "the performance should consist in a peculiar (to this Art) intimate congruity of the modes of expression of several Arts." The conditions must be such as to offer that "restful attitude" of pure æsthetic contemplation.

The Style absolutely requires an "entirely peculiarly rich use of instrumental means, the dimensions of the Music-Drama require it." This necessitates a theatre of a size corresponding to the dimensions of the means and the dignity of the work given. Upon the size, accoutrement, and perfection of the orchestra, depend much of the possibilities of emotion expression; upon the dimensions of the stage depend much of the effect of works that deal pre-eminently with large and grand subjects. That the Music-Drama is not a *genre* kind of art-work has been suggested (p. 66). That the problem is quite different from that of the French 'chambre' Drama is evident. Æsthetic effect often depends upon size as judged by its excess of man's dimensions. This is perhaps why grand stage effects are more hazardous than Paintings, in which the size of the picture is of far less æsthetical importance. Poetry has great advantages over the stage in being able to shift its scenery *ad libitum* and to make it of 'superhuman' dimensions. The stage actually puts something before us, and if that does not come up to our expectation—well, the distance between the sublime and the ridiculous is very short and downhill all the way. That the dimensions of the orchestra cannot be greatly enlarged without some corresponding enlargement of the theatre is naïvely shown by the way the voices are often drowned by the orchestra in a small opera house; the hearers are stunned, and naturally go away attributing the effect to Wagner,

as well as any false notes that may have emanated from defective instruments and playing.

The seriousness of the Music-Drama necessitates a kind of performance which differs from that which is the *fashion* on the modern stage. The proportions of the work render it impossible to give a decent representation as a part of the weekly répertoire. The fact that an intricate performance has to be given necessitates a *complete grasp* of each part by the actor and singer. The rhythm of Music is inexorable—it stops for no actor—hence *perfect familiarity with each part is necessary* for each and every participant. The “lofty” Style which we have attributed to the Music-Drama renders it expedient that a performance of it should stand apart from the current performances of the week. To be given in its proper manner, the performance should partake of the nature of a *festival*. It should be seldom given, but well given. It should not be degraded by too great familiarity—by too frequent performance, nor by mediocre performances, and one’s whole energy should be devoted to the art-work, not merely that remaining after a hard day’s work.

A

C 2

C 3

B





## NOTES.

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### Page 27. *Degree of Presentativeness of Art-works.*

Note 1.

To be more accurate, there are four phases of this presentativeness:—

(1) Arts like Poetry, (*read* poetry) that are purely representative.

(2) Arts like Painting, that represent some object or event in life, and yet *present* something to the eye also (not mere *symbols*, like words).

(3) Arts like Architecture and Decorative Arts, that do not represent any feature of life, and present something to the eye, and yet do not

(4) Like Music, present their *stimuli* for a limited time only and in a limited way.

Recited poetry and the stage are composite in their nature, the first partaking of certain qualities of (1) and (4); the stage combines qualities (2) and (4).

### Page 16. *The Arts and the Imitation of Life.*

Note 2.

This generalisation regarding qualities of presentativeness and representativeness among the Arts is somewhat closely connected with an analogous generalisation. Some Arts, Literature, Poetry, the Stage and Painting, are predominantly concerned with *human life* and its surroundings, viz., they are parasitical upon our interest in human life and its depiction. Other Arts, as Architecture, the Decorative Arts and Formal Music, are very little concerned with our interest in depicted human life.

Connected with both these generalisations, and intimately correlated with them and emphasising them, is the feature of the differential attitude of the various Arts towards the sensuously ugly and beautiful respectively. Thus Architecture, the Decorative Arts and Formal Music, offer almost exclusively dispositions of stimuli that are pleasing in themselves, whereas, the Stage and Novels often offer to the mind stimuli and ideas that are *per se* absolutely ugly, depending for their effect upon the satisfaction we derive from contemplating human life in its ups and downs of fortune. The virility of a novel sometimes excuses the inclusion of features and phases of human life, nature and morals, that are ugly or low to the point of disgust, and justifies a diction and mode of description that are intentionally the reverse of elegant.

These generalisations receive a partial confirmation from the case of the intermediate arts and the gradations of style within a single art. Painting presents stimuli directly to the eye, and represents objects at the same time. Much of the violent discussion regarding painting has arisen through this combination of qualities, whereby it can cultivate both the sensuously pleasing in form and colour, and the interestingly ugly, through the perfection of its means of detailed representation of form and colour. To a great extent, the paintings of Millet, Bastien Lepage and Adolf Menzel appeal to our interest in human life, and they often fly the fashionably elegant. In Decorative Paintings, Fresco, and Stained Glass, however, in which the means and end sanction a cultivation of the sensuously beautiful in form and colour, scenes from low life, and physically and morally ugly objects or events, are carefully avoided, and great stress laid upon elegance in the mode of representation. Detailed imitation of indiscriminate scenes from everyday life is much less conspicuous therein.

In that part of literature which is marked by a predominance in the employment of the sensuous stimuli of rhyme and rhythm, the occurrence of absolutely ugly objects and disgusting ideas is quite exceptional. There is a correlative agreement with the law in the gradations, even, between works marked by vigorous ideas and prose on the one hand, and elegant ideas and highly artificial poetical diction on the other. Music, even, displays at times an extreme regard for outward form. But when appealing more to our interest in human feelings than to our sense of musical beauty, it disregards some of the more formal devices. (Cf. *Questions on the Philosophy of Art*, part D.\*)

Note 3.

Page 9. *General Situation.*

It will probably be readily acknowledged that the Stage offers a larger number of imitative traits than any other of the arts, viz., the Stage is in a position to offer a more complete representation of the aspects of everyday life than any art. Aside from its easy solution of the 'flesh-colour wrangle' of Painting, and its avoidance of any of the perplexities of perspective in simple chamber scenes, it adds a most important element of imitation to Painting, or the Novel, in the living *dialogue* employed. But just because it enjoys this privilege among the Arts of imitating a feature of life, spoken language—to the naturalism of which our life-long use of, and familiarity with, make us extremely sensitive—for this very reason, the Stage is exposed to very severe restrictions in the matter of probability and 'general situation.' To represent in a novel a modern street scene, with two rough workmen talking together, may satisfy us, although the author takes no great pains to attain a high degree of naturalism by the avoidance of grammatical niceties in this conversation. But the same scene presented upon the Stage—where we not only see faces, figures, clothes, and movements, but also hear the actual tones of the voice and the words as spoken—will hardly pass our minds unchallenged if we hear the workmen conversing in clear, open, and subdued voices, and using a diction worthy of the drawing-room or the Senate chamber. How much more our minds would spontaneously rebel if the workmen proceeded to employ a lofty blank verse, or an elegant rhymed verse, or the dramatically pompous *recitatives* of the grand opera.

As an instance of the lack of feeling as regards the extreme importance of subject-matter and general situation as the *sine qua non* of the employment of a poetic diction, the following quotation may serve our purpose, and at the same time illustrate the tendency of 'overlapping' in the Arts to produce such examples of lack of harmony. About the original work—the novel, *Eugene Aram*—it will not be necessary to say anything. It was probably good enough not to deserve any such ruthless designs upon it as its author formed when he proposed to make a tragedy of it and thereby showed the besetting tendency of his age to regard any given subject-matter as expressible in two very different forms and dictions indifferently. In the short sketch of the tragedy, appended to an edition dated 1849, occurs the following opening scene. The setting is a perfectly definite one in the middle of the last century.

"ACT I.: SCENE 1. Aram's apartment, Books, Maps, and Scientific Instruments scattered around. In everything else the appearance of greatest poverty.

1st Creditor (*behind the scene*). I must be paid. Three moons have fittid since

You pledged your word to me.

2nd Creditor.

And me!

3rd Creditor.

And me!

Aram (*entering*). Away, I tell ye! Will ye rend my garb?

Away! to-morrow,—Gentle sirs, to-morrow, &c."

This needs no comment.

It is interesting to try to account for the callousness of feeling for Style displayed by works presenting modern life with direct discourse in poetic diction, as well as the obliviousness of the auditor-spectator-reader of such works. It may possibly be caused in the following way. It is a notable fact that people do so much *reading* in this day of daily

newspapers, monthly magazines, and books of all kinds, that they unconsciously fall into a very careless way of representing to their minds the objects and events described. We do not develop that 'plastic or concrete' type of mind which the ancient Greeks, who did not *read* so much, possessed in a high degree. We are losing that tendency of the mind to represent its images, excited by written words, in terms of clear sight. Our minds tend to become more and more absorbed in the purely intellectual side of things—in 'relations' rather than concrete objects, in the working out of plot rather than the pictorial value of situations, 'setting' and episode. We fix our attention upon what a speaker says rather than upon his appearance. Since the colour of objects is not always the most essential feature, we cease to observe it intently or take much pleasure in it. For a good many people the world would be quite as satisfactory in mere black and white. When we peruse a story or a drama, or a poem, hour after hour, we cease to represent clearly the 'stage side'—the pictorial side—of the work. The personæ end by being mere phantoms—disembodied characters thinking certain abstract ideas and participating in certain events. The visual side of our mental 'constructs' is often allowed to become lamentably weak from the standpoint of art, although advantageously, perhaps, from the standpoint of economy of energy in thinking, for we depend upon our ability to 'fill out' our construct if required at any time to do so. (Cf. James' *Psychology*.) We hurry through a book in a short time 'just to get the idea of it.' If suddenly stopped while reading about Odysseus and required to give an account of his dress and figure, one will probably discover, perhaps to his own surprise, how very vague his image of the Greek's physique and costume was; in fact, Odysseus, for all the attention the reader was paying to the visual side of his personality, might have worn a modern dress-suit, or none at all. [A person, when taken off his guard, will often be utterly unable to tell the colour of the eyes of his most intimate friends even. Perhaps the lack of development of the visual side of the images aroused by reading may be partly due to the rapidity with which we read, which is too great to allow an image to be properly evolved. The supply of the 'latest novels' being so prodigious as to prohibit a second reading of any book, the reader comes to rest satisfied with very hazy mental 'negatives.'

Another tendency of the mind in reading co-operates with this. In accordance with the law of familiarity and repetition, and lapse of the means from consciousness, it is probable that in reading a great deal to one's self, the mind has a tendency to grasp the ideas stimulated by the words without the *phonetic side of the words ever rising in consciousness*, much less ever being dwelt upon for the pleasure accompanying it. School-boys are often able to translate a foreign or dead language, viz., get at the ideas in English form, without paying any attention to the ring of the words in the language they cannot understand *directly* as they read. And if given to reading very much by himself in his own language, a boy will often mispronounce a word that is very familiar to him in reading as far as its *idea* is concerned. A foreigner will sometimes read Shakespeare with ease so far as understanding is concerned, but fail so ridiculously in pronouncing it as to make us doubt very much whether he can appreciate its *phonetic* poetry—the sensuous expression of force, or majestic swing, or tonal beauty or weirdness or fantasy. All of which goes to show that, as the blind-deaf may read by tactual sensations, so it is possible by very much rapid reading to one's self to establish a correspondence between eye and intellect that partly suppresses the purely phonetic or vocal side of language—a side that is very important in art-literature and in the discrimination of naturalism in expression. This is sometimes brought home to us in a roundabout way.

In reading Greek plays after modern novels and plays, one is struck by the 'wordiness' of the characters, particularly when keeping before one the lack of acted *action* on the Greek stage. Aside from the lengthy narratives of the 'messenger' in the Greek dramas, there are often long speeches, some of them in regular forensic array. The persons often speak at length in cases where the circumstances, according to their own accounts, demand instant *action* on their parts—therein showing a *sang froid* and lack of initiative that would make the spectators of a modern melodrama simply wild. In fact, a modern reader is liable to lose patience a little at the forensic delays, or else find the plays very insipid.

The Greek audience, on the contrary, is said to have hung upon the words of the actors, and moderns who read Greek with perfect ease continually remind us of the wonderful qualities of the Greek language, not only for the grandeur of the ideas expressed, but also for its phonetic face-value. If the ancient Greeks were great talkers, it is probable they were good listeners as well, that is, they were probably sensitive to, and interested in, a part of language that we are not so sensitive to, nor so tolerant of—beauty in the means of expression and the mode of expression, quite apart from the relevancy or the scientific accuracy involved in the *ideas* expressed. The Greek mind was not only 'plastic' as regards the visual vividness of their images, but 'plastic' also as regards the phonetic side of the means of arousing these images. The resonant Stage is characteristic of the ancient Greek; the novel and scientific treatise, absorbed by silent perusal, is characteristic of the modern.

To sum up, then. Our minds, in reading, having a tendency to lapse from a condition of visual and phonetic 'plasticity' or clairvoyance, and vividness of representation being the main way by which a lack of naturalness or of artistic consistency evinces itself, our minds spontaneously lack the criterion that would reject such an absurd general situation as that proposed by a modern figure, in a modern scenic setting, employing a highly artificial form of poetic diction in the direct discourse of dialogue.

Note 4.

Page 25. *General Situation Proposed by an Art-Work.*

From what has been said it might be thought that all poetry dealing with modern life and feelings was absurd. Now this is the whole point of the matter of General Situation in Art-Works; it is not what is expressed, but the form in which it is set and what the art-work *proposes* to be. This 'proposing to be' is a dramatic moment for art-works. We are all familiar with the idea in everyday life. For instance, a hypocrite would only be an ordinary venial sinner, were it not that he 'proposed to be' one of the pillars of society upon a moral platform that is not really his. Certain acts of a noted poet have been severely condemned that would never have been noticed had he enjoyed the privileges of the ordinary man who does not trouble himself to produce anything out of the ordinary for human good. Again, it would be a waste of time to criticise the "naturalism" of a stained-glass window, permeated with lines of opaque lead half-an-inch in thickness. But when a workman, with a pompous show of superiority of the moderns, carefully paints for a glass window what 'proposes to be' a landscape by every line and colour in it, so that it is highly praised for its "remarkable fidelity to nature," then it is really worth the while to hurl a few critical thunderbolts at such a Titan of stupidity.

With the foregoing ideas in mind, approach Shelley's *Prometheus*, Goethe's poem "Edel sei der Mensch," and his *Hermann und Dorothea*. The first work, by the scenic setting, formally proposed by its ideas, its language and its general tone, makes us feel at once that it does not "propose to" present modern life at all. The second work, Goethe's poem "das Göttliche," is thoroughly modern in sentiment and in its philosophical attitude; it is directly addressed to modern readers; but it does not, from the first line to the last, suggest either that the poet Goethe is addressing us in conversational discourse, nor that some Tom, Dick, and Harry are chanting these sentiments to each other in alternate verses in the definite scenic setting of Piccadilly Circus. If it suggests any of the conditions of its delivery, it is that of a thinker who has carefully put forth in writing some ideas of a noble kind, sufficiently exalted to justify a somewhat more careful choice of words than that of everyday conversation. The third work proposes, as it begins and develops, a perfectly assignable locality in terrestrial space and a definite period of history—a modern period of which we have a pretty definite idea. The acting characters are put forward, the composing poet sinks himself completely into the background. (Contrast Byron in *Childe Harold*, and Thackeray in *Vanity Fair*.) In so far the situation does not differ essentially from one of Chaucer's "Canterbury" tales in indirect discourse, but the next step, in a moment and completely, changes the whole general situation proposed. The characters are posited as

speaking in direct discourse with one another, and the very words and sentences are given with the "I," "you," "they," etc., of one's personal relations towards his words. Now, the form of the language works on our minds, and, whereas formerly metre and rhyme seemed to be a perfectly natural and allowable part of the proposal of the work to be an art-work, now the metre and rhyme 'propose to be' the ordinary features of humble conversation, employed by a well-known people in a particular part of Europe about a century ago! By this proposal of a certain general situation, naturalistic criticism of the mind is involuntarily challenged, and the poem must suffer for it. Whether it can compensate, us sufficiently for this lack of lingual probability is another question. Whether such a feature be entirely fatal to our enjoyment of the work is not the question, but rather—does it not detract from what might otherwise be a greater effect.

Of course, this particular poem is not afflicted with rhyme; however, the final trochaic jerk of each line is an all-sufficient recompense for the absence of the seducing couplet. The whole poem has a very classical ring with its frequent Homeric "Also spracheu" (die Männer), and "Aber es sassen" (die Drei), and "Da versetzte" (der Vater), etc., etc. One is reminded of the German translator Voss, whose idyll *Luise* enjoyed being translated from the German into Latin, B. G. Fisher, 1820.

To appreciate the above point concerning Goethe's *Hermann*, the reader must go to the original. By taking big doses at a sitting, he can emphasise the impression, for the pompous epical tramp of the hexameter grows a little monotonous, especially when employed by the Herr Apotheker. "Schwerlich, versetzte darauf der Apotheker mit Nachdruck," etc. Or, "Und es versetzte darauf die kluge, verständige Hausfrau; Vater, nicht gerne verschenk ich die abgetragene Leinwand," etc.

There is yet another general situation proposed by many modern poems. It is particularly prevalent in collections of poems for purposes of recitation. This type of situation is not divulged by any explicit prologue of setting, but opens usually in the midst of an exciting scene, or else answers a question which it repeats or leads the hearer to imagine. The general situation posited is that of direct discourse in the mouth of the one reciting the poem, or the suppositional narrator in case the poem is read to himself by the contemplator. Here again we are face to face with language "proposing to be" the spontaneous and natural language of the narrator, a diction that is sometimes highly artificial in the matter of metre, rhyme, poetic imagery and out-of-the-ordinary words. The style, with proper gestures, is often employed to render a story of an exciting escape more harrowing, or a sailor's yarn, or how an exciting horse-race was won, or a train saved by little Annie, etc., etc. Often amusing pseudo-naturalistic turns are thrown in, such as an effort necessary to remember a date exactly, but such touches of human fallibility never seriously interfere with the scansion and integrity of the rhyme-scheme. Regarded as an impromptu performance by an unprofessional storyteller they are marvels of the rhapsodist's art. Such a general situation is susceptible of a yet more intricate turn when, by the use of "he said," "she said," and their words quoted in direct discourse, we get a storyteller relating some event from modern life in perfect rhymed verse, and quoting from memory the lyric effusions of his modern characters, who must also have been expert in the use of rhymed verse under the trying circumstances of a narrow escape, a shipwreck, a horse-race, or an attack by Redskins. The quoted lisplings of children often display the same infantine regard for the exigencies of rhymed verse. Some of R. Browning's poetry suggests an attempt by a scholar to exploit the tone of ordinary conversation for poetical purposes. One of the most striking cases of 'general situation proposed' is that of a modern novel thrown into form of a tale in direct discourse with colloquial tone, the telling devolving on one of two persons or a party of persons, who add to the attempted realism by interpolating exclamations, questions, etc. This frequently takes the form of a meeting between two "old friends" and a working up to the narrative by more or less natural remarks. When the story thus told does not occupy two volumes, the effect of the *viva voce* narrative may be justifiably vivid. In poetic diction it savours of the ridiculous.

The following quotation from P. G. Hamerton concerning a different art may make clearer this point of *Style* in connection with what an art-work *proposes* to be.

"The inconvenience of imitative art from the imaginative point of view is most visible in those works that attempt to combine fact with imagination. The best instance of this was a picture by Gérôme, in the Salon of 1868: it was entitled *The Poet touched by the Muse*, and it represented a gentleman, in the costume of Lamartine's youth, reclining at ease on the sea-shore. He was painted with praiseworthy accuracy and truth, down to his short whiskers, his cravat, the high collar of his cloak, his buttons, and his boots—the boots, in particular, being a perfect fit, and evidently as good as new. The Poet had laid down his hat and gloves with his cane, and was contemplating the sea, when the Muse, bearing her lyre, put her forefinger on his curly occiput. This is the reason why the sea-shore was crowded with female beauty. Venus, standing on the crest of a wave, and a score of lovely attendants disporting themselves where land and water meet. Neptune, too, is coming shorewards with his white horses, and all for the entertainment of the gentleman in boots; rude nature being represented by a flock of seals on his right hand, but to these he pays no attention. A picture of this kind is really little less than a disaster, because it mixes the most incongruous elements, modern tailoring and antique mythology; and also because it gives fiction, without making it credible and acceptable by any ideality of conception or of treatment."

Note 5.

Page 115. *Situation of Choral or Concerted Expression.*

The 'duett situation' has been cultivated in Opera, and might be quite justifiable in the Music-Drama also, providing the dramatic action were made to demand it quite naturally. Wagner certainly recognised in his art-works the highly lyrical character of a situation in which the emotion of love played a large part, and in which the emotions of all the persons present were approximately similar or sympathetic. (Cf. *Rienzi*; *Flieg. Hol.*, ii. 3; *Loheng.*, iii. 2; *Tannh.*, ii. 2; *Tristan*, ii. 2; *Meisters.*, iii. 3; *Walküre*, i. 4; *Siegf.*, iii. 3; *Götterd.*, i. 1.)

It is as if the homogeneity of feeling at such points admitted a concentration of attention thereupon by allowing the musical themes to be more fully developed to their musical consequences than is possible in the somewhat broken phrasing where the dialogue does not spring from an extended homogeneous emotional situation. Of course, the situation of one character speaking by himself displays 'homogeneity of feeling,' but the opportunity for Music to exploit such a *status quo* is marred by the serious suggestions of improbability of a person soliloquising in the regular form of a song or in lyric expression at all. At any rate, it seems probable that a situation marked by the homogeneity of the sentiments of all *personæ* actively concerned constitutes one of those art-moments which are the necessary antecedent of a 'concerted piece.' If the conditions implied in Canons *A* and *B* are completely fulfilled in the action, etc., such situations may form an essential feature of the Music-Drama, although they have no place whatever in the Spoken Drama. They may occur as often as an action, conceived to the end of naturally requiring them, might demand. This implies, if carefully weighed, that such choral or concerted situations would not interrupt the action, i.e. the action would naturally require them, and hence would be one differing from that of ordinary dramas. As a feature of the Style of the Music-Drama, such concerted situations must be accounted as not only highly peculiar, but also peculiar in the direction of *Music*—bringing out its possibilities in the direction of harmony and severe rhythm, which render such a synchronous expression of feeling possible. But the conditions imposed by Canons *A*, *B*, and *D* are absolutely essential, and in the non-fulfilment of these conditions lay much of the inconsistency of chorus and sextett situations in operas. Once the whole action is quite different from the outer aspects of modern everyday life, and of a lofty character, and conceived from beginning to end in terms of Music, viz. as a peculiar action, such choral situations may be rated as one of the finest features of the Style as distinguished from that of the Spoken Drama. It is possible, however, that the Oratorio may claim the choral situation as most peculiarly fitted to its Style. Wagner notably avoided concerted situations to a great extent in *Tristan* and the *Ring*, and possibly this may be explained by the nature of the materials or myths, or by the

severity of his reformatory exigencies, or by his high-wrought desire for dramatic intensity, unity and consistency. After *Parsifal*, it seems possible that, could he have outlived the paltry crying-down of his works and have carried on his art-activity until those keen 'dramatic' tendencies so necessary for his reforms had quieted a little, he might have entered spontaneously into a field more pronounced in its musical or lyric quality than *Siegfried*, for instance. In the beginning of his career, it was of the greatest importance for his reforms to adhere closely to a dramatic spirit that would evade all suggestions of the current operas with which his works would have been spontaneously compared by the minds of the auditors, much to the detriment of the serious *un-operatic* tone aimed at in them. With all his justifiable severity of minimising ensemble pieces, *Siegfried* remains the only one of his dramatic works totally lacking a choral situation.

In order that such choral situations should be demanded, an action would be required that arrived at certain stations where the homogeneity of the feelings of the persons concerned was such as to justify a concerted form of expression to a point of agreement connoting severe rhythmic and harmonic agreement. With this homogeneity of emotional impulse, and a situation avoiding suggestions of everyday life, concerted expression would be justified to any extent sanctioned by the unity of the dramatic action. Of course, such an action would hardly depend for its æsthetic effect upon arousing any dramatic thrill comparable to that aimed at by strictly naturalistic Drama. The general æsthetic effect of the action would be far less exciting, viz. much more sober and sculpturesque and mixed with musical elements. This is probably the differentiated general æsthetic impression that ought to characterise the Music-Drama. In connection with this festival quietude, notice that, although Canon *C* prescribes severe unity of dramatic development, the *purpose* of this unity was that of ensuring ease of comprehension, and not, as in the case of a realistic play, of aiding in rendering the play more thrillingly effective. In this last effect, the opera *Traviata* does not reach the play *Camille*, upon which the text is founded, and the Music-Drama hardly aims at reaching the thrill (such as it is) of *Traviata*. But therefore it enjoys a compensation that must be felt to be appreciated. Grant that the Music-Drama cannot affect us like a modern melodrama or novel. Grant that we are not as keenly interested in the sorrows of Wotan, Siegmund or Siegfried as we may be in those of Lord Sporting and his two offspring. Grant that the deeds committed in the Music-Drama are enacted in a way that is tame as compared with the violent slaughter of characters in Shakespeare. Grant that we suffer no pangs and palpitations of expectancy at unforeseen catastrophes of plot. Admit all this, and there still remains to the Music-Drama a worthy compensation for its renunciation, in the pre-eminent factors of highest conceivable poetic beauty, pictorial beauty, dramatic dignity, and beauty and mystery of Music. With such a recompense for renounced sensationalism, the Music-Drama can well justify its claims for existence as a desirable dramatic species.

The Music-Drama does not cultivate the field of plot-interest solely. This is a difficult point to grasp, because we are accustomed to a view of the dramatic idea that centres itself about plot interest, and mystery, and thrill, to the degree that we find difficulty in conceiving of dramatic action as displaying at one and the same time a severe dramatic unity and an epical face-value in all parts. Yet this very feature characterises many of Shakespeare's plays, for they not only have a dramatic value, taken as a whole, but also display a beauty and poetic force in the details of the dialogue. Thus *Midsummer Night's Dream* is quite interesting enough in the plot to engage our attention throughout a play which is marked by a lofty poetic imagery in the detailed dialogue, even to the point of lyric beauty at times. Just so a 'scene' may be beautiful in the pictorial sense, and yet be an essential feature of the action of which it forms a part. It reminds one of the predicament of a modern novelist, namely, how can he make a work that holds his reader, without being obliged to resort to the swamps of moral impurity or physical filth or volcanoes of sensationalism for the detailed treatment. But just as a drama may be conceived within the bounds of pictorial beauty, providing it be thus conceived *ab initio*, so it may be possible to conceive an action, stamped by unity of dramatic development, in terms of expression æsthetically pleasing in all parts. Such a combination would be the very

opposite of a novel depending solely for its effect upon the thrilling qualities of the plot, and employing the most drastic means in its service. Or a stage play with a remarkable plot interest, but sinking to a very low grade in its elaboration thereof. Excerpts taken here and there from such works in a way to eliminate the plot interest would possess no 'face-value' whatever; in fact, might be unfit for contemplation. Can we hope for composer-poets who will be willing to renounce the fame of successful 'first works' and 'first nights,' and carefully submit themselves to a personal development, to the end of attaining a perfect equation between the æsthetic medium of the Music-Drama and its final form and effect? It will mean that the tragic factor will be constructed upon much broader lines than an exciting novel or melodrama, and yet will not possess that purely sensuous attraction of the formal decorative arts or formal music. It will strive after and reconcile both effects, and thereby labour in a field sanctioned by its wielding a sensuous art, Music, and a supersensuous art, Drama.

*Note 6. Page 55. Reversal of Order of Presentation of Images or of Situations. Drama.*

A queer case arising from the reversal of images has lately been furnished by running the photographic films in a reversed order in the apparatus called the American Biograph. For instance, the reversal of a scene in which a man takes off his coat and drops his silk hat on the floor, gives both articles of attire *rising* of their own accord into place, showing the entirely prejudiced way in which gravity acts, in that, while it may be depended upon for depositing an article released from the hand, it is by no means accommodating in the reverse movement of replacing the article. A phonograph, in which the forward movement of the cylinder is reversed, is said to produce a very amusing reversal of ordinary speech. By dwelling upon such cases of features that completely lose their integrity by a reversal of their order of succession, the reader will get a vivid idea of the importance of a particular order of the images or the presentations of sense in some kinds of art-works, and of the impossibility of changing their order without altering their effect, often for the worse.

*Note 7. Page 40. Attention as a Factor in Æsthetic Contemplation.*

Attention is an important factor in the æsthetic contemplation of the Music-Drama. It is truly said, that 'we see what we look for,' and 'those learn who already know.' In regard to the possibility of attending to a multitude of sensations, it probably depends somewhat upon familiarity with things attended to, and also upon practice. It is remarkable how, in listening to music when the mind is over active or excited, the mind can pass from one thing to another with a rapidity that almost amounts to insuring a consciousness of several different things at one time. It would almost seem that since familiarity and practice are all that is necessary to cope with multiplicity of stimuli, therefore no limit to the complexity of a Music-Drama or any work of art is necessary. But, although it is possible, under certain abnormal and fortunate circumstances, to accomplish wonders in the feat of multiplex distribution of attention, yet it is not expedient that art-works should *demand* any such familiarity, memorising, practice, effort, and excitement, as is associated with attempts at multiplex consciousness. The mind does not naturally and voluntarily undertake *tours of force* in contemplating art-works, for the reason that it does not resort to art-works for great nervous stress or hard labour. Moreover, it is easy to deceive one's self regarding the efficiency of 'familiarity, excitement, and practice' in insuring consciousness of simultaneous stimuli and ideas. Both familiarity and practice are dangerously implicated in that sort of mental 'automatic action' that simply allows us to be *insensible* to several stimuli, and mental excitement of any kind (especially the cutaneous shiver) is easily mistaken for æsthetic gratification.

As regards a peculiar effect of familiarity upon musical audition it seems possible that the following may suggest an explanation. Subtle, or violent, or unfamiliar tonal modulations sometimes confuse and perplex one at first hearing, but seem perfectly clear and satisfying after several auditions. It is as if the mind was gradually persuaded of the rightness of the harmonic progressions in themselves, or that it was apprehending them as intended by the composer, and ended in being perfectly satisfied that the progressions



were proper, and were rightly apprehended, and hence gives itself up unconditionally to æsthetic enjoyment. So potent does the effect of repeated hearings of a work seem to be that it will sometimes insure the apprehension of phrasing and harmonic progression where both are confused and rendered cloudy by bad performance. The auditor might finally become shockingly indiscriminative as regards the actual performance.

[Just as a foreknowledge of the words may enable an auditor of a Shakespearian play to "hear," although he be so far removed from the stage that the words would be partly indistinguishable without the aid of memory as a determinant. Likewise, under strong stress of excitement at a play, the senses seem to acquire a super-sensitiveness that enables one to follow intently what might otherwise be somewhat vague. Nevertheless, in spite of the efficacy of complete familiarity or of excitement under certain circumstances, it will not do for the composer-poet to depend upon, or assume, the presence of such abnormal conditions.]

Page 69. *Pure Lyric Drama.*

Note 8.

If it could be safely assumed and taken for granted the whole audience were not only familiar with the underlying idea of the action (somewhat like the Greek audience as regards the mythical events underlying a Greek tragedy), but also quite familiar with the detailed course of events presented by a particular Music-Drama, it seems possible that the Music-Drama might develop a style yet further removed from Spoken Drama. The poet-composer might devote himself wholly to conceiving a purely lyric text, devoid of all explanatory dialogue or any expressions appealing to the discriminating or ratiocinating faculties, since no revelations of the progress of the action would be required by the omniscient audience. The text might be greatly reduced in proportions, and would consist wholly of lyric expressions of feelings; in fact, so thoroughly lyrical that it would inspire the composer at every step to develop the resources peculiar to his art. He would be no longer concerned with what is irrelevant to the nature of music and lyric expression. That elucidatory dialogue does assume the appearance of 'stuffing' is evinced by libretto books. (Of. text of Gluck's *Alceste*, &c.) There is a certain amount of the dialogue devoted to the elucidation of the 'situation,' that makes itself felt upon perusing a large number of text-books of operas, for one is struck and amused by certain practices of the librettists—certain cut-and-dried ways of setting things straight by means of wittily turned dialogue, question and answer (as in Greek plays) so ingeniously and palpably arranged to illuminate the benighted audience regarding *status quo* of affairs, that one smiles at the device. These cases of naïve mannerism will usually be found to mark the most unlyrical parts of the text, and the music takes a corresponding 'drop.'

It is difficult to imagine how such features of dramatic action could be entirely eliminated, since they seem to be an essential factor in the art-enjoyment of Drama, although subtleties of development of action appeal predominantly to the intellect. The pleasure taken in following plot-development as it reveals itself by dialogue would seem to be allied to that keen pleasure an Athenian audience took in the 'forensic contest' portions of its dramas, and interest in close-knit development of action by dialogue seems an essential feature of Drama. Moreover, even if foreknowledge of the audience could be fully depended upon to render all 'explanatory' dialogue unnecessary, it seems almost as if the resulting drama would assume a vague dream-like form in which the mental jumps occasioned by poetical use of *hiatus* would suggest the incomplete character which pure pantomimic performances display. It would approximate perhaps to a tone-picture pure and simple. However, without concrete examples it would be difficult to form an opinion of the possible merits of such a highly specialised development of the style of the Music-Drama.

Wagner's brilliant use of condensed narrative and his concentration of action upon certain points is an approximation to pure lyric drama.

Page 35. *Canon A.*

Note 9.

The idea associated with this is very closely allied to an idea applied to ornamental design, viz. the idea of 'conventional' design. Both ideas denote a departure from an accurate reproduction of life or nature, but for a different reason, and in a different way.

A photographic reproduction of Windsor Castle in the bottom of a tea-cup is as bad as a stage representation of a 'drawing-room' with expression of compliments by chorus in evening-dress.

It will be found that many of the principles here broached are of much wider application in the consideration of all kinds of art-activity than might appear possible. (Cf. *Questions*, parts C and D.)

Note 10.

Page 35. "*Artificiality*" as an *Obnoxious Idea*. *Art and Life*.

Some persons may feel alarmed at this use of an idea that has fallen very much into disrepute in the judgment of art-works in late years. It would hardly be worth while to point out the many and varied ideas associated with the word 'artificial' and to attempt a definition of its noxious and innocent phases respectively. It carries with it some unpleasant reminiscences of the wig-period of Art, as well as the crinoline and corkscrew curls of the present century. However, those who have studied art-works of all kinds, will be quite familiar with the legitimate occurrences of artificiality, especially in connection with the 'unavoidable symbolism' of Painting (cf. Note 13); the unavoidable and even sought-for artificiality known as conventionalism in reference to Decorative Art; and finally that recognised feature of art-works, that they, being products of human industry, skill, feeling, and mind, are 'artificial,' especially as regards an art so original in conception and execution as *Music*.

The application of the term to the Music-Drama (when it is said to be a 'highly artificial product' and 'necessarily different from everyday life') will be understood by anyone who has seen a performance and has grasped the predetermined unnaturalness of the 'general situation' as described on p. 9. If the reader be still obdurate, and troubled by that wholesome but narrow phrase "the artist should go to Nature," he may find some help in the following considerations:—

(1) In art-works it is expedient to observe if idealisation is accompanied by a plain suggestion of whether the art-work *proposes* to be naturalistic, or does not even pretend to be.

(2) Whether the idealisation shows itself clearly to have been *intentional* on the part of the artist, or not.

(3) Whether the idealism was rendered *unavoidable* by the nature of the art-process and the purpose of the art-work, or not.

(4) Whether the idealism is *justified*, i.e. whether the æsthetic gratification attributable to the idealisation is a sufficient recompense for the lack of a greater naturalism (provided the art-process or the 'general situation' rendered a higher degree of naturalism possible), or not.

It may interest the reader to apply the foregoing considerations to the case of a pen-and-ink drawing in which the artist has allowed his manual skill in pleasing pen-strokes to participate in the general effect, and to the case of a Japanese print in which the artist has allowed his sense of pleasing colour-*areas*, or effective black-and-white *masses* to predominate over a severer naturalism that was possible.

In regard to the Music-Drama, points (3) and (4) find special application, since, by its general situation of lyric dialogue and orchestral accompaniment, it is irretrievably stamped as highly 'unnatural,' and its contemplators must decide whether the presence of music and all the resulting peculiarities of elevated style attendant thereon are a sufficient recompense for the renounced naturalistic imitation of contemporary life to justify the extreme degree of idealism or 'artificiality' displayed.

This suggests a further scruple that troubles some persons. From the sad failures, revealed by the History of Art, in artists dealing with any but their own particular epoch, the conclusion is drawn that anything like recourse to costumes, &c., unlike those worn at the present time, is not only doomed to failure, but is also a phase of that dangerous tendency to Medievalism that must be expunged. The first point is sufficiently dealt with in the text. The second point is merely a refusal to recognise that it is possible

to admire greatly the works of Chaucer or of Fra Angelico, and even to introduce a costume of the Middle Ages into a painting, without wishing to revert to the Fendal System, or the use of spear and sword in war, or of a pre-Luther Catholicity in religion. The theoretical writings of Wagner thoroughly separate him from the 'Nazarenes' in painting, and it is even possible that *they* formed a link in the progress of Art less virulent than is made out by those who put the separation of Art and Religion on exactly a par with the separation of State and Religion.

Page 15. *Art and Religion.*

Note 11.

"The tone in which Euripides says, 'Zeus, whoever Zeus may be,' belongs to a different strain of agnosticism. He has come to think of Zeus as a conventional symbol for 'Laws of Nature.' . . . The state of mind in which men listened greedily to the tales of priest and prophet, and yet reasoned about them, wavering between belief and scepticism, is difficult to apprehend, and yet bears some analogy to the mental condition of a time like our own, in which, for many reasons, a musical ritual serves as the *euthanasia* of positive beliefs, and a learned curiosity about the origin and history of religion is taking the place of a strong and active faith."—*A Guide to Greek Tragedy*, by Lewis Campbell.

Page 54. *Idealism and Modernity.*

Note 12.

Idealism may be regarded as an escape from the aspects of our daily life. For this tendency three reasons may be given.

1. The outer aspects of our everyday life are *not beautiful*. Painters and sculptors feel this in the difficulties of handling modern costume. Ecclesiastical costume offers a slight escape for painters as well as the other extreme—rustic costume without any of the elegancies of fashionable 'cut.' Cf. Millet, *Sower*, and *Gleaners*. In the heat of reactionary tendencies, we may say what we please about the equalness in artistic merit of costumes. *There are æsthetic differences*. It seems probable that Greek sculpture would not have attained that remarkable spontaneous development had the costume been that of the Esquimaux. So sculpture was the Greek costume as depicted in sculpture, that it has held its place in Art down to the modern travesties upon it.

2. However, the chief artistic disability of modern costume, and other distinctive features of modern life, is that they *prevent idealisation*. Not only is modern costume not artistic, it has its associations of familiarity with everyday life that prevent it being poetical. Mental association renders an art-work absurd that attempts to combine the dress-suit with lofty diction in dialogue of direct discourse. It immediately recalls our friend Brown, or Jones, or White, and induces a feeling of anti-climax. It therefore does not satisfy—

3. Our craving for highest imaginable beauty—for poetic perfection, as distinguished from the imperfections and distress of actual life. The mind can arrive at something pleasanter to think about than actual existence, and it is this side of Art that enthusiasts for modern life as an art-theme often miss. Art has a differentiated side of its own, and arts like Music and Architecture offer sensuous experiences that would not be attainable in the absence of these arts, and it is a general feature of Art that it justifiably departs from other features of human activity in order to furnish the mental *variety* of stimulation in a novel manner. After looking at a collection of paintings of actual life, the mind enjoys looking at pictures that represent something else than actual life, and it is possible to enjoy intensely both the beauty of natural scenery and the beauty of a symphony. How many men throughout the ages have taken a delight in escaping from cares of everyday life by reading their Homer, or Virgil, or Bible!

Painters often avoid present ugliness by painting indefinitely, by paying attention to light and shade effects, and effects of light rather than hard forms. Both poets and painters escape by depicting other phases of life than our own—oriental scenes, historical-genre, mediæval, or classic themes. The names of Goethe, Schiller, Delaroche, John Gilbert, Rossetti, Burne Jones, Holman Hunt, Albert Moore, Leighton, and Boecklin recur to us in

this connection, and this century has seen a great and sincere widening of appreciation of the works of art of the past—Chaucer, Spencer, Dante, Æschylus, Gothic Architecture, the paintings of the pre-Raphaelites, Northern epics. Much of modern art has been an appreciation of the neglected primitive emotions of our nature—of those pure human and more universal emotions that are less associated with modern legal restrictions of city life, society elegance, careless frivolity, and pedantic rationalism. This is no plea for returning to the usages of primitive Scandinavian or Greek life, but only a suggestion of the recognition of the *æsthetic* value of some features like pictorial costume, deep and sincere feelings, awe of nature, sensuous mystery and spirituality. And it is just in the recognition of some of the pure human feelings that lay a possibility of *modernising* ancient myths which Richard Wagner seized as an opportunity.

As a rule Wagner kept quite free of human sacrifices and the apparatus of formal oracle. These are features so far removed from our life, knowledge, and feelings, that they can hardly appear natural when used by our poets. To us the idea is naïve—that one can know the future—know what is going to happen—know *when he is to die*, and then take precautions against it. If fate meant anything, it would mean that which would happen without fail and without any possibility of interference by man.

A great feature of Wagner's success above and beyond Gluck is his *modernisation* of myth. It is astonishing that Wagner not only succeeded in employing myths as a picturesquely ideal setting for his Music-Drama, but he also made them thoroughly modern in feeling by developing that side which it was in his artistic power to develop—the *inner* side of the outer incidents furnished by the myth (cf. Dante's artistic development of *inner* side of life). His plays, unlike Gluck's *Alceste* and *Iphigénie*, do not turn on the cruel sacrifices of past days, or upon caprices of the gods, &c. They are at one time *æsthetic* and modern in feeling, they appeal to our own feelings.

In dealing with primitive myths it is difficult to avoid those cruel or un*æsthetic* phases of ritual, or those impersonal sentiments associated with clan system of social association, of which Greek dramas display many 'vestiges' in spite of the dramatists belonging to the city commonwealth system of aggregation. As a rule, Wagner successfully avoided the clan ethics and sentiments that sanctioned and condoned human sacrifices as a formal and compulsory ritual. He also avoided much of that oracular apparatus which hardly appeals to our minds as strongly as to the ancients perhaps, since it is so far removed from our daily experience, scientific and religious ideas. He even succeeded to a great extent in avoiding the difficulties offered by magic and the supernatural.

The importance of the consideration that the Music-Drama must be idealistic, and yet modern, and that the reconciliation was rendered possible by recourse to the 'pure human' feelings, is evinced by the survival of the fittest that took place in Wagner's own mind. He had a good opportunity for testing the matter, for about the year 1848 he was occupied with several subjects—a myth-theme, a religious theme, a romantic drama, a historical theme. If *Stegfried's Tod* triumphed over *Jesus von Nazareth*, *Wieland der Schmied*, and *die Sarazenin* in fair mental contest, it bespeaks much for the foregoing consideration.

This is not the exact term wanted in this place, but it would take too much space to draw distinctions. From the standpoint of naturalistic painting that aims at the reproduction of objects already existing in paintable attitudes, as in landscape painting, the Art might be abstractly defined as follows. Painting is the cultivation and practice of the most fitted modes of disposing the *means* (according to the particular art-process) that the limited finiteness of means may suggest a maximum of those most important truths or facts of the *infinity* of nature, such mental suggestion to be effected with the minimum expenditure of the contemplator's energy in mere work. Or, painting consists in the ability to suggest a maximum of concrete facts among the infinite number of Nature's facts by the most fitted disposal of the very limited finite means of pigmental symbolism, with reference to the minimising of expenditure of energy of the spectator.

It is not until one has grasped the vast *discrepancy* between the infinitude of facts of a natural scene, however small, and the very limited finiteness of the means at the disposal of the painter to suggest the scene, and further, that this is not a discrepancy in magnitude only, but in *kind* also, inasmuch as paints are totally unlike the materials, &c., of the objects, &c., for which they stand—it is only when all this is grasped that one appreciates what is meant by artistic suggestion regarded as a psychological process on the part of the contemplator of the art-work. It is like that remarkable human invention of numbers whereby any assignable number can be represented with ease—and all by the device of permutations and combinations of *ten signs only*.

The importance of this idea for the present purpose is that it lays stress upon the device of suggestiveness as a means of accomplishing the impossible, which is exactly the problem before scene-painters, in so far as their scenery deals with the outer aspects of Nature. They have to suggest a very great deal with a very little, and with the minimum expenditure of human energy consistent with the accomplishment of their effect. Anyone who has had occasion to observe modern paintings must have been astonished at the wonderful effect of a painting at thirty feet distance when compared with the crude material means by which the effect is attained. So surprising is this at times that one can hardly believe it possible, even when he steps towards and away from the picture several times and observes that strange change from coarse daubs and streaks of paint at three feet, to the effect of beautiful out-of-door Nature at twenty feet. Now, if this ingenuity in suggestiveness be spontaneously practised by easel-painters, how much more expedient that scene-painters should cultivate a manner that the scale and nature of their art renders absolutely necessary. Moreover, a very bold style of treatment will probably be found to agree best with the carrying out of a poetical conception upon the pictorial scale required by the dimensions of the stage, and the economy of human energy. This would hold particularly of highly imaginative scenery, and also for those effects of *decorative* dispositions of figures and colours. In a modern exhibition of paintings it is often a pleasure to find a painting that one may approach near without ruining the impression. Of course, this consideration has no meaning for stage pictures, since the distance of the spectator is predetermined and sanctified, except for deplorably curious habits of opera-glasses.

Page 7. *Musical Symbolism and Emotional Chiaroscuro.*

Note 14,

Intimately connected with the foregoing disparity between the fulness of Nature and the meagreness of the pigment-symbolisms employed to suggest Nature is the disparity between 'feelings' and those modes of musical expression which are employed in the Music-Drama to express the feelings. I refer to the point that, whereas the feelings in Drama range from intense pleasure to actual pain, the music expressing them is confined to the very limited gamut of 'less pleasing' to 'more pleasing.' To make this clearer, take an instance from the Graphic Arts. These employ a wide range of materials from the rich palette of the easel-painting down to the delicate lines of the silver-point drawing. Now, light and shade of Nature is represented in the monochrome processes by a conventional symbolism of shading, ranging from the white paper down to the browns of an etching, the blacks of pen-and-ink drawings, charcoal drawings, and printer's-ink of wood-engravings. It will therefore be readily seen how amazing the process of suggestion is, when the infinite gamut from sunlight to total darkness is replaced by a symbolism ranging only from the white of paper by subdued light, and the greys or blacks and browns of silver point, wood-engraving, and etchings. If the reader fully appreciates this point, he will be a long way towards appreciating the extraordinary rôle played by mere contrast in music in expressing very different phases of emotion. Thus sudden loudness in the midst of very soft tones is fairly startling in effect (cf. *Oberon*, overture), and so with all the musical contrasts employed by musicians. This will serve to make clear the point alluded to in the text, music need not be made to actually cause the hearer pain in order to suggest suffering on the part of the persons of the drama. The suggestion is vivid enough if the contrast between the music range from more pleasing to less pleasing, i.e. the gamut of

'pleasure to pain' in life is replaced in the *art-work* by a musical chiaroscuro that goes no deeper into the blacks than the greys of the silver point or steel-engraving, thereby fitly marking that difference between the actual discomforts of life and their pleasing reflection in an art-work—be it a painting, drama, or poem. Thus in a dramatic performance, "The spectator is to be moved, even harrowed, if you will, but the final effect on him is not that of anxious excitement. It is rather one of calm and meditative awe. If real belief took the place of imaginative illusion, the charm would break. The mental satisfaction must outweigh the horror. Harmony of impression must not be confused by actual pain. Men are not to be sent away sorrowful, nor merely excited, but satisfied, though it be with sadness. . . . Hence tragedy always loses something when it leaves the high road of humanity, and turns aside from representing the great primary emotions to engage with some exceptional passion, some eccentric horror."—Lewis Campbell, in *A Guide to Greek Tragedy*.

Note 15.

Page 28. *Music and feeling, Quality D.*

In this connection, notice the way in which music has naturally been associated with festivals and with the theatre; also the way in which people have spontaneously come to have images suggested in their minds by the hearing of music—mental images which may add to the pleasure of the music, whether they be uniform for the whole audience or not. A good deal of the orchestral music of this century spontaneously suggests many fleeting images. Other music may not do so.

The *weakness of programme-music* might be shown experimentally by exposing blind persons to the effect of music and having them note the images excited by particular portions and then comparing these results. Evidently, if the cases were those of blindness from birth, the music could hardly excite those visual images required by some programme-music. Yet such persons might experience a keen pleasure from the music, and possibly they might even associate their own feelings, pleasurable or sad, therewith. But they could hardly have clear visual images stimulated by the music, having no necessary stock of such available images. Tactual images would hardly suffice.

The foregoing imaginary case may serve also to give us a clearer idea of what is meant by the expressions 'pure human' and 'subjective' as applied to the Music-Drama. It is conceivable that a person born blind might enjoy the ordinary feelings of human beings, and in ability to feel pleasure, pain, affection, sadness, love, and anger, he could appreciate much of those universal experiences of mankind that are irrespective of race and outer conditions of life. (Cf. reference to *Tristan*, Night, p. 71.) Such feelings would be highly 'subjective,' in that they could be felt in the absence of a sensitiveness to or knowledge of the visual qualities and conditions of the external world, viz., irrespective of the existence of a great part of the objective world, in the sense of extra-ego world, and particularly in the sense of such impersonal or ratiocinating events as a volcano outbreak, a railway accident, the passage of a legislative bill, etc.

Note 16.

Page 70. *Subjectivism.*

These terms Subjectivity and Humanistic are so often used in connection with this subject, and have such important implications in poetry in general, that it is expedient to attach some definite meaning to them. They attach themselves to the fundamental ideas that have already been embodied in our Canons *A* and *D*. (1) Humanistic is opposed to all that attaches itself to any particular time, place, or custom (*A*). It connotes that which is "common to all" as opposed to "*manners*." It is opposed to the social customs of any particular historical period and to any treatment of such features such as is implied by 'occasional' poetry, so common in the 'complete works' of modern poets. *Æsthetically* it is opposed to that subject-matter which does not enjoy the possibility of universal appreciation and comprehension.

This leads naturally to the idea of subjectivity, because that subject-matter, which on the whole is most "common to all," is founded upon *feeling (D)* which can be approxi-

mately the same under very different aspects of life and social usages. This would naturally be that factor of art-works most capable of universal comprehension and appreciation. In this sense, relating to feeling, the term is opposed both to that which is distinctively a product of the intellect (reasoning powers) and to that which is 'outer' in the sense of objective to man. Poetry dealing with cold logic, and with inanimate nature in itself could hardly be called subjective. It is in this sense of confined to human experience—or interiority—that it is opposed to the objective events of melodrama and the adventure of epic. Such are the meanings of these terms as employed in the present work. However, in order to feel strongly the contrasts associated with the terms subjective and objective, it is well to read examples of poetry that strongly contrast with some of the foregoing ideas, and such are not difficult to find, since the history of poetry has many examples to show of the infringement of these features; in occasion-poetry (associated with laureateship), poetry relating to events and phases of life strictly local in time and space; descriptive poetry attempting to reproduce the outer world of inanimate nature; finally, didactic poetry, argumentative poetry, moralising poetry, and 'witty' poetry in general, especially epigrams. Much of the poetry of the eighteenth century will furnish excellent examples, stronger than any definitions that could be given. (Cf. Pope's *Epistles*, *moral essays*, witty epitaphs and rhymed satire.)

Page 35. *On Style.*

*Note 17.*

A view of Style as the broadest generalisation of the Philosophy of Art has been suggested in *Questions*. In the present work it is not necessary to take such a broad biological view of Art, nor to discuss whether a Style of the Music-Drama can spring out of the present human environment. For present purposes Style is a term connoting that condition of harmony of an art-work most conducive to the particular æsthetic gratification which it is most adapted to offer by virtue of the activity of the particular factors entering into it—their psychic qualities, etc.

By employing the term "æsthetic gratification" instead of Beauty, we avoid the unpleasant difficulty of defining Beauty *an sich selbst*, or proposing an *index expurgatorius* of beautiful objects and conceptions. We avoid giving to any one of the analysed elements of art-works, such as outline, colour, or sound, a tyrannic monopoly of definable Beauty, which for our purpose connotes no more than the summation of gratification arising from the multitudinous *stimuli* of a peculiar kind (those associated with the contemplation of art-works) and arranged in a way most favourable to the cumulation of the pleasurable *stimuli*.

Thus 'æsthetic gratification' is not an effect of the contemplation of the Beautiful (!) solely, but applies to a cumulative effect that may be associated with the contemplation of features of art, life, or nature, that are pronounced sublime, forcible, beautiful, pathetic, picturesque, grotesque, or comic even. However, in spite of the usefulness of so general a term and its application to effects of Music, Drama, Architecture, etc., it is interesting to retain the distinctions marked by the terms, sublime, beautiful, picturesque, etc.

We thus take up Style in two phases only of fitness: (1) A condition of fitness of art-work to contemplator (auditor—spectator—reader) for a certain end (effect). (2) A fitness of the art-product (art-work) to the activity of the means whereby it is produced, including the psychic qualities of its constituent art-media (for the Music-Drama this means the psychic and æsthetic qualities of the Music, Poetry, and Stage composing it).

As regards the nature of *stimuli* denoted 'æsthetic' as distinguished from neural *stimuli* in general, the criterion is only a common-sense sort of average of conclusions reached after long and careful and unforced exposure of the mind to the sympathetic contemplation of nature and art-works; controlled by a careful, and as unprejudiced as possible, reference to the art-products of the past, and by the most carefully verified and broadest generalisations possible from art-works of *all* kinds, of all countries and all times accessible; and lastly, by direct observations and laboratory experiments. If this is not 'objective' or dogmatic enough to suit a stickler for absolute truth, let him propose a better criterion for grateful and long-suffering students.

Evidently the present work is, as a whole, a protest against a very prevalent opinion that Style consists solely in some little peculiarities in the use of words by various writers—or in the particular 'brand' of paper used by a water-colour artist. Biology has happily disposed of the idea that the differences among organisms consist solely in the differences between their general outlines and colour of hair (if any). For over two centuries the bane of Architecture has been the prevalence of the idea that Style consisted solely in the use of some particular forms and figures (which could be supplied in charts ready for use), and that the way to invent a new Style was to sit down with pencil and paper, and extemporise forms of windows and arrangements of windows, until a façade was devised differing entirely from any one previously known. Such a superficial line-on-paper, building-block conception of Style is unworthy of an age that has realised what deep differences among organisms underlie superficial traits, and knows how that, historically, architects have obtained celebrity for their "Style" in designing, when they were really doing no more than perpetrating the error of a 'poet' in fancying that Poetry consists in rhyme and metre, and that letters or conversations or witticisms or medical advice become Poetry the moment they can be scanned and jingled. The architect that fancies he has devised a new 'Order' when he has drawn a column with large rusticated cubical blocks introduced at regular intervals in the shaft is worthy of the friendship of the 'poet' who cannot renounce his rhyming propensities long enough to write a letter or relieve his philosophical tension in ordinary prose, or to compose an epitaph worthy the poetical dignity and the religious solemnity of death.

#### Note 18.

#### Page 49. *Artist and Environment.*

This is merely a single phase of that interdependence of artist and his visible environment, nowadays generally recognised as a factor in the explanation of features of art-activity in the history of Art. The *modus operandi* of this interdependence has been dealt with by Taine in his work *Intelligence*; in its historical aspects in his *Philosophy of Art* and *English Literature*. If one realises deeply the difference between the daily pabulum of impressions of everyday life of a sculptor in ancient Greece, a painter during the picturesque periods of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, and of a modern sculptor or painter, he will be able to realise perhaps why Sculpture flourished so spontaneously among the ancient Greeks, while among us it may be compared to the artificial cult of a dead language; why colour is such a conspicuous feature of Medieval and Renaissance painting; why lyrical poetry and novels for solitary perusal, and music for public performances are such conspicuous features of present-day Art. In Note 19 will be found a reference to the attempt to cultivate a Colour-Art in an epoch or country in which life is not pictorial.

Connected with the foregoing is the consideration that complete harmony or Style depends upon a coincidence among a number of complicated factors—art-process, life, artist, etc.—a coincidence occurring seldom enough in the progress of Art to sanction that feeling of the sacredness of the few great art-works displaying perfect Style.

#### Note 19.

#### Page 95. *Unthought-for Originality and Poetic Impulse to Work.*

The trouble with a good many modern artists is that they have nothing to say, and yet keep on talking. It is quite wonderful to many persons to observe how easy originality is to an artist who has something to say—a message to give to the world—an idea striving for expression. In many cases artists are not at all enthusiastic about their art, nor are their minds of a poetical nature—they are totally dull to qualities of nicety regarding forms, and colour and nature of objects—they are not finely discriminative regarding the thousands of objects that surround them in their every-day lives. People are astonished at the paintings of Rossetti and Burne Jones. Modern English painters may work too much on detail, but, at least, they realise the true field of painting as a highly poetical art—as an art most highly differentiated from any natural or mechanical productions in the direction of more choice; æsthetic pictorially, poetically, and morally. Like Wagner, the English pre-



Raphaelites seem to have felt what objects to select for depiction, and were endowed with a fine imagination and poetical nature. It makes one weary sometimes to look at a large collection of reproductions of the works of various artists of Germany and France during the last three decades, and note the lack of some of the above qualities. There are outrageous reproductions of the costume and Grecian bend of 1873 and thereabouts (cf. J. de Nittis), great masses of pictures of peasant ugliness and filth, without any redeeming poetical value, and not even 'bold' in their expression, all showing that dirt, and suffering, and machinery are not necessarily highly picturesque or pictorial. It seems probable that a landscape painter can afford to be much less discriminative about the objects he depicts than a figure painter, for the latter is obliged to deal with the troublesome matter of fashions in dress. Among the foregoing instances of painting without discrimination, may be ranked the painting of vegetables, and bull-painting pure and simple. Then there are the weak religious subjects, and the Parisian models posing as Madonnas with pounds of circumambient cherub-flesh. There are the sprawling and suggestive naked figures being deluged with waves, with a flimsy excuse of classical allusion, belied by the lack of idealism in the figures. Or there is the group of figures adhering in vain to an environment that does not seem to be natural to them. Heads of John the Baptist on salvers, dramatic horrors, and men in contorted postures, until one turns with satisfaction to the cool and reposeful and decorative stained-glass window, with its simple figure, bold lines of leading, and rich colouring. Not that the afore-mentioned phases of painting are not healthy signs, but only that they ought not to crowd out of appreciation another field of painting that seems to be legitimate—that of elevated poetical conceptions. At all events the latter field seems to be essential for the style of the Music-Drama, and much can be learned from the paintings of those artists marked by a refined æsthetic sensitiveness and discrimination and a *sincere* avoidance of what is unnecessarily ugly, or coarse, or physically repulsive. With such feelings, with something to say, and a keen desire to say it, an artist ought to be able to overcome the difficulties of its expression, whether in words, music, colours, or stone, and the originality of the result would probably take care of itself without being laboriously sought for.

*Page 26. Caution Necessary in Extreme Musical Innovations.*

*Note 20.*

Of course, there is often reason in objections to unpleasing eccentricity in art-works. Aside from the case of Music, in which a real auditory development is necessary before a work with striking innovations can be appreciated, there is always a possibility in an art-work of any kind, of—

(1) The work being actually *faulty*, a poor work by a beginner, or by an 'old hand,' and due to lack of ability in conception or execution, or taste, or observation, or feeling, or industry, or lofty purpose, or a summation of these qualities;

(2) The innovation being due to spontaneous or deliberate outrageousness, to a desire for notoriety quite aside from any merits in the work itself, or to simple delight in scandalising people's feelings, and ferocious iconoclasm. This spirit in art-works must be carefully guarded against, for it often makes capital out of our desire for novelty. On its mental side such aberrations are often due to vanity or to desire of appearing original at any cost. This often participates in—

(3) An 'originality' copied from the works of some real genius by a man catering to the desire of the public for the tendencies displayed in the works of genius.

It is this liability to be 'tricked' that ought to render people cautious, but this caution is very different from a refusal to give an artist a sympathetic hearing, or scurrilous misstatements of a critic concerning a novel art or a highly original work of genius. When it is found necessary to resort to untruth in order to decry an art-work, it is probable that there is something in the work.

There are also peculiarities of musical diction that may arise from a voluntary or compulsory isolation of the composer from the average musical ear. I have elsewhere suggested that this possibility of cultivating musical-composing in comparative isolation, combined

with the feature of music that it is not constrained to find its art-images in the outer aspects of modern life, and its unique qualities, whereby it is less likely to be affected by the deplorable, or otherwise, condition of the other arts—that all these peculiar features may partly account for the extraordinary fact of the flourishing condition of Music at times when Architecture, The Small Arts, Poetry, and Painting were all in a very low condition. Applying the idea of isolation to the case of Wagner, and remembering the way in which he gave up his mind to the impetus of the tragical side of his works, together with the felt necessity of avoiding suggestions of the operatic style of music, it may be possible to partly explain some of his peculiarities of musical diction that many ears find objectionable in his later works, and attribute to his seeking for originality, or else to his revolutionary tendencies. It may be quite easy for a composer under certain circumstances to get 'out of touch' with the normal musical sense and ear of his epoch. In the case of Berlioz's 'shocking passages' it would seem that stress ought rather to be laid upon the composer's peculiarities—upon his being part of a movement that was very revolutionary, and left behind it in Painting many examples of pictorial art overwhelmed by the tragical spirit of the stage and literature—and upon his very fantastic imagination, which led him to overstep the bounds of the expressive powers of music, and the field most peculiar to it, as distinguished from Painting, The Stage, and Literature. One who is familiar with the gloomy side of Wagner's life—the lack of that sympathy he craved; the inadequate performances given to his earlier works, the unjust criticisms of the press and personal abuse, the disgust and disappointments of the Dresden, Paris, Vienna, and Munich experiences—would hardly wonder had Wagner experienced a sort of estrangement from the world about him, and in desperation had ceased to pay any regard to the average musical sense, and let his mind compose for itself, and as it listed. This might have led, where the dialogue was gloomy, or unemotional, or narrational, or expressive of keen suffering, to an abstract form of vocal phrasing unsatisfactory to the ear, and not musically comprehensible—the modulations too violent, fragmentary, indistinct, or ugly, and the vocal ejaculations unnecessarily crabbed and fitful.

Note 21.

Page 98. *Music, Exaggerated Powers of Expression of.*

Note what Wagner himself says regarding the prelude to the third Act of *Tannhäuser*. "When first composing this piece, I allowed the subject of expression to betray me into almost recitative-like phrases for the orchestra; at the performance, however, I felt that their meaning might well be intelligible to myself, who carried in my head the fancy-picture of the incidents thus shadowed, but not to others. Nevertheless, I must insist on a complete rendering of this tone-piece in its new shape, since I deem it indispensable for establishing the *Stimmung* needed by what follows." This passage (translated by W. Ashton Ellis) is worthy of many readings for its bearing upon the subject under discussion. And the very fact that Wagner's programme to the *Lohengrin* prelude is itself preluded by a short disquisition upon the *Grail*, shows the danger of descriptive music.

Note 22.

Page 19. *Subtlety.*

It must be distinctly understood that the 'subtlety' here meant is not that of the intellect—of mathematical cleverness in dealing with logical relations of highly abstract conceptions—more or less beyond or opposed to our physical experience. It is rather an evasiveness of *feelings*—a mocking of verbal definition. Its vagueness is not that of an abstract conception far removed from any definite concrete object as its prototype, but rather the mystery of cause and the undefinability of a feeling that may be just as 'real' as any of our mental experiences are. If the reader has not a clear idea of this unclearness, let him listen intently to a fine orchestral performance of the prelude to *Lohengrin*, and while listening, try to write down in definite language the emotional suggestions of the tremulous melting chords. Otherwise, he may content himself with the evidences here offered of what straits an author is reduced to in trying to describe clearly that unclearness.

One of Wagner's reforma was the elimination of the practice of repeating words and phrases. Regarding this practice, he remarks, "All doubt at last was taken from me when I gave myself up to the *Tristan*. Here, in perfect trustfulness, I plunged into the inner depths of soul events, and from out this inmost centre of the world I fearlessly built up its outer form. A glance at the volumen of this poem will show you at once that the exhaustive detail-work which an hitorical poet is obliged to devote to clearing up the outward bearings of his plot, to the detriment of a lucid exposition of its inner motives, I now trusted myself to apply to these latter alone. . . . Perhaps the execution of this poem will strike you as going too far into subtle (intime) detail; and even should you concede this tendency as permissible to the poet, you yet might wonder how he could dare hand over to the musician all this refinement of minutia, for carrying out. In this you would be possessed by the same bias as led myself, when drafting the *Flying Dutchman*, to give its form nothing but the most general of contours, destined merely to play into the hands of an absolute-musical working-out. But in this regard let me once more make one reply to you, whereas the verses were there intended as an outli.y for operatic melody, to be stretched to the length demanded by that melody through countless repetitions of words and phrases, in the musical setting of *Tristan* not a trace of word-repetition is any longer found, but the weft of words and verses foreordains the whole dimensions of the melody, i. e. the structure of that melody is already erected by the poet."—Wagner, *Zukunftsmusic*, translated by W. A. Ellis.

Repetition of words is sometimes a ludicrous feature of operas—especially when they propose the general situation of a setting from modern life. If the action is wholly idealistic, repetition of words and phrases is much less offensive. For this reason, we excuse a great deal of it in oratorios, especially where the text is founded upon a religious theme. However, the expediency of repeating a phrase many times is very doubtful. The naturalness of the procedure on the part of the composers is evinced by numerous examples in opera, oratorio and songs, and is probably to be accounted for by the nature of Music, whereby it does not attain its best effects instantly and momentarily, but requires a certain time for developing its themes and for working its emotional effect upon the hearer. Herein Music shows its likeness to the emotions for which it stands. One of the chief differences between emotions and sensations or ideas is their relatively longer duration as experiences. An emotion usually takes some time to develop, and when once started its reverberations do not cease immediately. Sensations or ideas can succeed each other with great rapidity and little serious interference with one another. Music would fain linger over a situation, and therein it is elegiac, or idyllic, or epic. To a certain extent the slow and measured character of the action and acting of the Music-Drama allows this, but, withal, the inappeasable hunger of an audience for *events* renders it very difficult to accomplish this, and moreover, Drama is rather opposed to it.

If two characters are left face to face (cf. the 'rapt gaze' scenes of *Tristan*, *Flying Dutchman*, *Meistersinger*, *Siegfried*, *Götterdämmerung*, *Parsifal*) for a considerable period of time, the audience seems to grow restless for 'something to happen.' An audience is so unaccustomed to contenting itself in a theatre with music pure and simple, and being accustomed to a continual flow of words in the spoken Drama, feels ill at ease when asked to feast its eye upon a picture full of repose, accompanied by entrancing music suggestive of the emotional tone of the scene. Nor is this the only difficulty.

It was mentioned that Music is slower in its revelations than Language, the reason being, perhaps, that words only excite ideas of emotions without any vivid sensuous suggestions of their nature. With the proclamation "I love," language is really at an end as regards the expressing of the emotion; further than this statement it can deal with the 'relations' only of that emotion, such as denoting the object of the affection (you) or the degree of intensity, or the reasons therefor, etc. But Music can take that single cause of the proclamation and play upon it for whole hours, at every movement suggesting vividly the nature of the feeling, and, unlike Language, it need not keep on repeating the same

phrase. If the two imaginary characters simply stand rapt in their own feelings, without troubling themselves to 'say anything' (as they might well do in actual life did the intellect not assert itself), the audience feels as if they had forgotten their parts or something had gone wrong on the stage. Nevertheless, this is a situation highly characteristic of the Music-Drama as distinguished from the Spoken Drama, since it would lack all sense in the latter, from the absence of any Music to suggest to our minds the feelings underlying the silence of the characters. It is just such an extended situation that gives Music an opportunity of expressing the unexpressible. But for such a scene, a repose in contemplation on the part of the audience is required.

Wagner has shown how mere repetition of words and phrases may be avoided in the vocal part. The danger in a thoroughly poetic treatment of the dialogue is that it tends to a detailed fullness of treatment, of dramatic development, and of dialogue, more adapted to independent Poetry or Drama. It brings in a wealth of imagery that may become episode unless carefully chosen.

Note 24.

Page 108. *Difficulties of Treatment.*

It must be understood that we here speak of two *results* as analysed products of what may really be a single conceptual process. Thus in Parts (7) and (9) Vocal Music and Poetry are treated apart, but as Wagner has shown it is in the singleness of conception that the perfectly unified product of tone and words must result. We are obliged to treat the *results* of this process of simultaneous conception as two separate phases of phenomena.

Note 25.

Page 75. *Concentration of Action in Greek Drama.*

"The difficulty of the task which the ancient playwright had to fulfil is enormous. In about half the time that is occupied by a Shakespearian play, the hearts of thousands were to be drawn forth, and fixed on a supreme crisis, in which some serious aspect of human destiny was typified. The crowning issues of one or more representative lives has to be summed and manifested in a few scenes. And this must be done with completeness of effect. The struggle of man with fate must be displayed in its rise, its culmination, and its close. When, in addition to this, it was required that the action should seem literally continuous, so that the presence of the chorus throughout should not be felt as improbable, the severity of requirement was extreme. The difficulty was met by choosing the most critical moment for representation; and in so far the imagination of the spectator was less exercised than when, as in Shakespeare, he is called upon to witness a series of actions more or less widely separated in time [and place?]. The ancient drama is thus characterised by intense concentration."—*Campbell*. (Cf. Wagner's device of concentration and lyric extension, *Tristan*, ii.)

Note 26.

Page 51. *Simplicity of Greek Dramas.*

"For the opposite of unity, in the true sense, is not multiplicity, but incoherence. The distinguishing note of ancient tragedy is not unity, but simplicity, which is a different thing. . . . Simplicity and concentration, as characteristic of the Attic masterpieces, may be opposed to the greater comprehensiveness of a Shakespearian play. . . . The most striking of all differences between Greek tragedy and the Shakespearian drama, consists in the number, variety, and complexity of the characters."—*Campbell*.

Note 27. Pages 115, 126. *The Differential Prominence of the Various Factors (Means of Expression) of the Music-Drama in Different Situations and from Moment to Moment.*

All the means of expression of the Music-Drama can vary among themselves in importance from moment to moment, as the nature of the situation requires. Thus at times, the orchestra assumes the upper hand, at other times it sinks, and the lyric dialogue becomes incisively prominent, such inequalities springing always from strictly dramatic exigences, not from caprice or conventionality. In other words, this differential ebbing is a species of dramatic *subordination*, justified by the increased beauty or effectiveness attained

thereby. There are times when the minds of the auditors should be forcibly directed to the words of a certain character, and nothing should distract the attention from these words, or perchance prevent their being understood. At times the orchestra becomes the bearer of the dramatic movement, or assumes a justifiable musical prominence. Sometimes spectacle, or scenery, or scenic effects even, may strongly solicit the spectator's attention.

This differential conspicuousness (ebbing and flowing) of the various modes of expression—taking place always within the bounds of *unity*, is not only justifiable, but a very important feature of the Music-Drama. It may often go a long way towards preventing that *congestion of stimuli* which is so dangerous. It makes for the economy of the auditor's mental energy.

Examples in Wagner's *Tristan* "mir erkoren, mir verloren," importance of *words* and understanding. "Tristan's Ehre" and "einsam wachend in der Nacht," relative unimportance of *words*, and importance of *music* and suggestion.

The music and musical tone ought never to lag, or *suddenly* drop or rise, especially in a manneristic way, as it often did in the opera, where the passage from spoken dialogue to recitative and aria was highly manneristic. There should be musical and dramatic *continuity* and subordination.

However, this does not mean that the language can rise to such importance as to be spoken in ordinary tone of voice, nor that the music can ever sink (orchestral or vocal) to mere discord or formless melody.

Page 117. *The Greek Drama a very Artificial Form of Drama. Reasons for this Artificiality. Acting.*

Note 28

"In an area holding many thousands, however closely packed in concentric circles, it is obvious that a drama, to be seen and heard and followed, must have the greatest simplicity and clearness. Complicated situations, number and variety of characters, incidents diverting attention from the main business, underplots and unexplained transitions, are excluded by the conditions of the spectacle. Thus outward causes conspired with the native bent of Attic genius in imposing on the poet and the actors alike the necessity for directness and unity of effect. . . . When any art is young, imagination answers generously to the artist's demands. . . . above all when he works through language, the most elastic and pliable of all art-media. [Cf. Hamerton on the disabilities of graphic arts as compared with literature.] Day and night scenes were of course purely artificial on Greek stages. . . . There are delicate modulations of voice and shades of facial expression which are possible in a private room, but useless in a theatre. A still greater difference divided the ancient from the modern stage. Such changes of attitude . . . marking critical points in the action, must have been maintained for a considerable time, to enable the whole body of the spectators to realise them. Frequent movement and gesticulation would have been meaningless, even if the cothurnus, the padded bust and the trailing robe had not impeded motion. . . . The grouped figures thus, as it were, brought nearer the eye (in the absence of magnifying lenses) must often have seemed as still as in a tableau vivant—the "dumb personages" (κῶφα πρόσωπα) and other supernumeraries adding to the effect. The actor was a sort of speaking statue . . . The whole scene bore a majestic resemblance to the marble reliefs which in later times the stage was adorned.

To maintain with dignified pose and gesture the character which the poet intended, and which the maker of the mask had stamped in statuesque nobility upon the face; to make felt by everyone of the 30,000 spectators the significance of every change, and above all, through the slow and measured rhythm, which alone could be followed by such a multitude, to carry home the warmth and vehemence of strong emotion, must have required powers and accomplishments of no mean order. Declamation, whether in recitation, recitative, or song. . . . must have been of the first importance: and it is only natural that to make a voice. . . . was an indispensable pre-requisite."—*Lewis Campbell, A Guide to Greek Tragedy.*

"During the earlier period of the Athenian drama the principal part in the training

and instruction of the chorus was undertaken by the poet himself. In fact, the regular name at Athens for a dramatic or dithyrambic poet was *didaskalos*, or 'the teacher,' owing to the part he took in teaching his play or poem to the chorus. . . . In fact, they were quite as much stage-managers as poets."

[Contrast this with the division of labour that leads a composer who has never had anything to do with the stage to write operas. Note also that in R. Wagner we have almost a unique phenomenon—that of a real artist being a stage manager, or rather the unique phenomenon of a stage manager being a real artist with an eye for pictorial beauty and composition.]

"This intimate connection between the poet and the stage, between the literary and the theatrical part of dramatic production, continued to exist during the great period of Athenian drama. Sophocles appeared personally in some of his plays . . . Euripides also seems to have superintended the training of his choruses in person, as there is a story in Plutarch which represents him as singing over one of his odes to the *Choreutæ*."

"The profession of acting in ancient times required a great variety of accomplishments. The words of a play were partly spoken and partly sung, and it was necessary that the actor should have a knowledge of Music, and a carefully cultivated voice. He had to combine the qualities of a modern actor with those of an operatic singer." (Cf. Wagner on importance of acting.) "The purpose, then, of ancient dancing was to represent various objects and events by means of gestures, postures, and attitudes. . . . The art was carried by the Greeks to the highest perfection, and a good dancer was able to accompany a song with such expressive pantomime as to create a visible picture of the things described."

"But towards the end of the fifth and the beginning of the fourth century the practice in these matters underwent a change. Poetry and stage-management began to be sharply discriminated from one another. A class of literary dramatic writers arose, such as Theodectes and Aphareus, who were quite as much rhetoricians as poets. They knew nothing about the details of training a chorus or preparing a play for representation."—*A. E. Haigh, The Attic Theatre.*

#### Note 29.

Pages 112, 140. *Festival Conditions of Performance of Greek Dramas.*

"The whole people drawn together under a religious and also a civic sanction; business suspended for several days; all minds together bent upon a keen enjoyment which came only once a year; how different from the modern night performances before a casual audience of a few hundreds, whom chance or inclination brings to one of many 'houses' to look by gas-light at a piece that has been acted nightly by the same actors for a great part of a year!"—*Campbell.*

#### Note 30.

Page 139. *Greek Drama, Shakespearian Drama, and Music-Drama contrasted.*

(In a few points only, and from modern standpoint.)

*Cf. diagram opposite.*

It is hardly conceivable that *Hamlet* could be well given in the form of a Greek drama—all its important acted acts, i. e. 'presentative' deeds, replaced by a narrative description of each, perhaps in a messenger's speech. (Cf. the scene of the killing of Ophelia's father; the play by the players, with the king's observed discomfiture; the grave-digger scene, and the subsequent events at the interment of Ophelia; the duel scene, stabbing of the king, death of the queen and of Hamlet.) All this is *essentially* acted action, not literary dialogue for reading to one's self, or a conversation play. Much less could the second act of Wagner's *Tristan* be given in narrative form, or even stage form, with the spoken dialogue of a play.

Music is an essential feature of the second scene of this act, and through music alone is justified the extreme extension of the situation—a scene that, without music and vocal dialogue, would be felt as unbearably long and verbose.

As a Shakespearian drama, *Tristan* would probably have been thrown back upon the

—  MEANS	GREEK DRAMA. (Tragedy.)	HAMLET (in form of modern performance).	MUSIC DRAMA. (Theoretical type.)
	Speech and Gesture	Speech, Gesture, and Acting (deeds)	Gesture. Acting (deeds). Vocal dialogue. Music (orchestral). Scenery (special cult of).
INTEREST	Interest in dramatic development and in language	Plot interest. Interest in performance of deeds	Gratification of music and interest in human emotions : feeling for the sublime and pictorial beauty.
APPEALING TO	Addressed to Mind (Intellect)	Feeling and Intellect	Feelings and senses in particular.
IN STRESS LAID UPON	Dramatic language and narrative	Action (acted) and dramatic dialogue	Inner feelings of characters and outer expression thereof. Highly pictorial.
GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF	Objective and rationalistic Absence of <i>acted</i> action Simplicity	Exciting Complication and Complexity	Subjective. Highly poetical and pictorially æsthetic. Highly lyrical.
→ Increasing importance of emotions — of inner events →			
ASSOCIATED FEATURES.	<p>Much narrative (cf. the 'messenger')</p> <p>Conventional acting</p> <p>Violent deeds (rendered possible by their not appearing on the stage, but being merely narrated)</p> <p>'Objective' events</p> <p>Deus ex machina</p> <p>Few characters</p> <p>Singleness of action</p> <p>Unities of time and place regarded</p> <p>Concentration of action</p> <p>No 'scenic effects' (including 'illumination')</p>	<p>Less narrative</p> <p>Naturalistic acting</p> <p>Less violent (distressing or repulsive)</p> <p>'Manners'</p> <p>Inner and outer events</p> <p>Intrigue</p> <p>More characters and more subtle</p> <p>Underplots</p> <p>Unities of time and place not regarded</p> <p>Elaboration of action</p> <p>Scenery of subordinate importance</p>	<p>Narrative and 'messenger' eliminated.</p> <p>Beautiful acting.</p> <p>Elimination of horrible and physically repulsive (because all 'presentative').</p> <p>'Pure human' feelings.</p> <p>Inner feelings and their outer effects.</p> <p>No deus ex machina : much action.</p> <p>Minimum of subtle intrigue.</p> <p>Simplicity of action and 'characterisation.'</p> <p>Severe dramatic unity.</p> <p>Importance of scenery.</p> <p>Ensemble and choral music.</p>
BAD TENDENCIES (in decadence)	Rhetorical coldness and pomposity	Melodramatic ferocity and over-acting	Too great complexity and fulness of stimulation of intellect and sense-organs.

display of intrigue, and would have required many more scenes. As a Music-Drama, *Tristan* is intensely *inner*. (Cf. diagrams. Cf. act ii. sc. 2, and act iii. sc. 2.) This does not mean that the Music-Drama should lack outer action, the more acted action the better, but such physical action should always be the result of the inner feelings, not mere outer adventures or of activity imposed from without or happening *from without*. The acted action should be the objectification of the inner drama of feelings, not a series of outer events.

The Greek drama addressed itself to the understanding, not to the eye; the stolid masks and compulsory limitations of movement of actors prevented much ocular display of action, together with the conventional relegation of dramatic deeds to performance behind the scenes and to narrative form. With the tragical and horrible events relegated to invisible performance and to 'representative' narrative instead of direct presentation on the stage, the Greek drama could well afford to be much more *violent* in its events (killing, human sacrifices, and matricides) than the highly presentative Music-Drama, in which all is enacted before the eyes.

Not only did the Greek drama, by its long narratives, speeches, conversations, and forensic contests, address itself predominantly to the understanding, the intellect, of the auditors, but also by reason of its intrigue action, its rationalistic and forensic type of character, and its general placidity. Neither mysticism, nor high-wrought chivalry, nor passionate expression of love plays a great part therein.

"It is clear that some conventions were discounted [by the audience], and that much was left to the imagination, including many of the horrors described as present in the scene. . . . Witness the description of the English and French camps in *Henry V.*, where the author was well aware that the representation on the stage would much disgrace," &c. . . .

Besides the attributes of simplicity and concentration, ancient tragedy is stamped with a degree of objectivity and outwardness, which, on the whole, differentiates its creations from those of modern drama, steeped as this so often is with the introspectiveness or self-reflectiveness that pervades the modern world."—*Campbell*.

I fancy that the average spectator would find the most obvious characteristic of a Greek play (aside from the chorus and the musical element) as distinguished from a modern play to be a lack of *represented* outer acts. The modern stage does not suppress all acted acts, or let them appear in the form of narrative only. In this regard the Music-Drama agrees with the modern rather than the ancient stage, at the same time making the outer (acted) events the result of the inner emotions, rather than extraneously induced. Of course, more striking differences would be brought out by replacing *Hamlet* (in the comparison) with a modern realistic melodrama proposing scenes from contemporary life.

















